

THE
LITTLE
BOOK
OF
HAPPINESS
REGINALD H. DODGE

SIXTH EDITION





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THE MIDNIGHT HOUR
AND AFTER !

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THE MIDNIGHT HOUR AND AFTER!

BY
REGINALD T. NAISH

WITH PREFACES BY
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Sometime Vicar of St. Paul's, Onslow Square, London, S.W.

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FORTIETH THOUSAND.

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To my friend and fellow-labourer, the Rev. R. H. HOLMES,
C.F., in gratitude for happy comradeship, through four
years of labour in Y.M.C.A. Huts and Hospital Wards,
during the great War, this book is affectionately dedicated.

R.T.N.

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

THE first edition of "The Midnight Hour," a work for which the Public are indebted to Mr. Naish, and which has been issued through the care and powers of Mr. Thynne, has already run its course I am informed, and is to be supplemented by a second Edition as speedily as possible. This is information which I am right glad to receive, and I humbly trust that a very large number of readers will both appreciate and value the Book as highly as I did when permitted to read it a few weeks ago. It deserves real and careful consideration and in these days when (thank God) as never before, the subject of the Lord's Return to claim the kingdoms of this world as His own is receiving such attention and study as it should always have had, it is indeed helpful both to read and to pray over such books as Mr. Naish's.

The subject is, of course, one of the most interesting that can engage our attention. The treatment of it is clear, thoughtful and truly spiritual, and I think we may safely speak of it as scholarly and helpful throughout, and whatever school of interpretation men profess to belong to (whether the Præterist, the Historicist, or the Futurist school) I think all earnest readers of this Book will say, “Thank God for its production.”

The whole Church of God seems to be awakening to the call which both the Lord Jesus and each of the Inspired Writers of the New Testament has laid upon his readers to think of, and be ready for, the Return of the Master; and great should be the zeal and earnestness with which their call should be accepted. Mr. Naish has, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, done much to stir up his readers to such study as is commanded; and with much gratitude to him and to the Holy Ghost as his Instructor, I, by the kindness and goodwill of the Publisher, heartily commend this little volume to the prayerful study of all who are both moved with the hope,

and frequently saying from the heart, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus, Come quickly. Amen.”

H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE.

1, Evelyn Gardens, S.W. 7.

June, 1921..

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

I AM asked once again to write another preface for a new edition of Mr. Naish’s “Midnight Hour and After!” and I need hardly say it gives me real pleasure to do this, because having already recommended it to the public, I am delighted to find that more copies are wanted, and that neither the first nor the second edition has sufficed to satisfy the public desire for the book. I feel sure that the need for it will continue, and that again and again new editions will be required; and I shall hope to long continue my humble part in the circulation of the book by pressing the

public to give it earnest and thoughtful study.

The subject is one that demands the most careful attention that can be given to it by every real child of God, and the marvel is that very many neglect it ; but let it receive the attention which it deserves, and all of us would be truly ready for the Second Advent of our Lord, and would gladly look forward to His Return as our Saviour and King.

I heartily welcome a third edition of this volume by Mr. Naish, and I trust that he himself may be truly ready to meet his Lord in the air, and may be allowed to prepare many by the publication of this book, which I thankfully commend to the attention of the public.

H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE.

April, 1923.

FOREWORD TO SIXTH EDITION.

AFTER just over a year, a fresh edition (15,000) of this little book is called for ! Whilst steps are being taken to translate it into yet other languages besides English and French.

God's blessing follows it everywhere, and the reading of it has brought many souls out of darkness into light.

Signs of the imminent Coming of the King of Kings continue to multiply, and ever louder and louder does the Midnight Cry sound in our ears !

May the Lord graciously use the book to awaken yet others to the solemnity of the present time, ere it is too late, is the writer's earnest prayer. " Yet there is room ! "

The Lamb's bright hall of song,
With its fair glory, beckons thee along :
 Room, room, still room !
 Oh, enter, enter now !

Bickley, Milverton,
Near Taunton, Somerset.

“ Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you ; they make you vain : they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise Me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace ; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you. For who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard His Word ? who hath marked His Word and heard it ? Behold, a whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind ; it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. The anger of the Lord shall not return, until He have executed, and till He have performed the thoughts of His heart : in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly ” (Jeremiah xxiii. 16-20).

THE MIDNIGHT HOUR AND AFTER !

CHAPTER I.

THE ARMISTICE.

A DULL autumn morning, but as I look out from my office window in the Strand, a newsboy starts running across the street ; what he is shouting is inaudible, but he is instantly surrounded by an eager crowd, and his papers disappear like magic. A little later and the Strand is one seething mass of human beings—riding, driving, walking, running, laughing, shouting, crying, singing. A delirious wave of happiness seems to possess every heart. The Armistice is signed ! The greatest war in history has stopped ! Fighting has ceased ! The Millennium is at hand !

No wonder everyone rejoiced. But did any one of those teeming crowds of merrymakers

realise what a momentous hour indeed it was, that they were ushering in with such an abandonment of joy? Did any consciousness come to those careless souls that on the great Clock of Time, there was probably sounding out that day the solemn striking of the Hour that was to herald the darkest period of this earth's sin-stained history, the Midnight Hour, the Final Hour of Gentile sovereignty on earth?

Yet, it seems likely that such was the case, for on that fateful November morning

ELEVEN O'CLOCK

could surely be heard to sound out in clear and unmistakeable fashion above all the din and tumult of the rejoicing nations of the earth. Who but the man the Psalmist calls "a fool" could doubt for a moment that it was by no blind coincidence, no miraculous, extraordinary chance, but by the Hand of an Almighty, Over-ruling Being, that fighting should be made to cease, and the long, bloody strife of the greatest of all wars should end,

- (1) at the ELEVENTH hour of the day,
- (2) on the ELEVENTH day of the month,
- (3) in the ELEVENTH month of the year ;
- (4) exactly at the end of the ELEVENTH month since General Allenby had entered Jerusalem on foot on
- (5) the ELEVENTH day of December, 1917 ;
- (6) and, on the ELEVENTH day from the signing of the Armistice with Turkey.

Surely in no more striking manner could an All-Wise Providence have impressed upon the hearts of those who had "ears to hear," that a solemn hour in the world's history had arrived; that "Hour" prophetically and symbolically referred to no less than nine times in the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, as the Final Hour of Gentile dominion over the earth, before the setting up of the long-expected and glorious millennial reign of the Son of Man, the Son of David, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Lord Jesus Christ !

In later chapters, the extent and character

of this final Hour, as clearly outlined in the Word of God, will be fully discussed. But before we can consider this, and understand its tremendous significance, it is necessary that we should first briefly show what the special meaning of this dreadful war is to the present dwellers upon this earth.

We might here remark that this book is not written for prophetic students, who will, to a greater or lesser extent, be familiar with much that is touched upon ; but it is written for the plain man and woman who hitherto have looked upon prophetic study as a thing for the few only, that they may get a clear grasp of the meaning of the tremendous happenings of the last ten years, and may see that all these things were unmistakeably foretold in God's Word ; may thus be led to hear God's Voice speaking to them in no uncertain tones, and to plant their faith in Him Who will yet surely reign over the nations of the earth, and Whom to know is life eternal.

For though the present confusion, turmoil, and unrest that pervade the entire world, is to the man and woman of the world, a source

of great perplexity ; to the student of God's Word the recent epoch-making events present no difficulty. They were all clearly and explicitly foretold many hundreds of years ago, and they have occurred at the exact time given in the Word of God for their fulfilment. Their final outcome too, is no matter of doubt or speculation, but one of the most absolute and unerring certainty. Events are rapidly and irresistibly moving towards a terrific crisis, fraught with stupendous import for every living being.

To enlighten those who are in complete ignorance of the "Hour" in which they are living, and bring them to face the facts before their eternal destiny is irrevocably fixed, is the object of this book.

This great war centred around Palestine and Jerusalem, and several times in the course of it, we endeavoured to impress this fact upon the minds of all around. The Bible, as we shall see, emphatically stated this, and consequently, *so soon as Syria was freed from enemy domination*, the war came to an abrupt end. The Armistice with

Turkey was signed on October 31st, 1918, and ELEVEN days later fighting ceased everywhere.

In that graphic picture of Israel's history given in Moses' song in Deut. xxxii. 8, we read: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." And although, for their sins and rebellion against Himself, as outlined in that same chapter, God forsook His earthly people, the Jews, and allowed the Gentiles to scatter them, and take possession of their land; yet, of those same Gentile nations in that same graphic chapter, verses 35 and 36, God said: "To Me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time":—that is, the Gentile nations who had persecuted the Jewish people—"for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. For the Lord shall judge His people"—that is, the Jews—"and repent Himself for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut

up, or left." The concluding words of this wonderful prophecy, in verse 43, are: "Rejoice, O ye nations, with His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will be merciful unto His land, and to His people." The nations are here invited to join in the rejoicing at the rescue of the Jews and Palestine from the degradation and desolation that would befall them, because of the blessing that would come to the whole world as well, at the universal reign of Christ.

Again, in the 25th chapter of Jeremiah, a picture is given of a great world-wide war that was to cover the whole earth. Several nations, we are told, in verses 28, 29, would try to escape being drawn into it, but in some way or other all would suffer. This was exactly what happened in the recent war. And though some nations succeeded in maintaining a so-called neutrality, yet they all suffered severely in many ways, through submarine warfare, loss of trade, and other causes. The war was to be a recompense upon the nations for their treatment of the Jews, for in verse 14 it is stated: "For many nations and great kings shall serve them-

selves of them (i.e., the Jews) also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands." And in verse 32 we learn that the war would spread "from nation to nation" like a great whirlwind sweeping onward with irresistible force. It was probably to this passage that our Lord referred when He gave as one of the signs of the End of this present age, "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." The passage reads: "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground."

Probably in no previous wars have there ever been such a vast number of the slain, who have never been buried, but whose bodies have been literally dung upon the ground. This has partly been due to the terribly destructive effects of modern high

explosives, and partly to the cruel and stupendous nature of the struggle. Whilst never in any previous war have there been dead bodies "from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth." Practically every country and every sea claims some dead bodies as a result of this titanic war. The official figures of the slain in the Allied Armies as given by the French Government are as follows :—

Belgium	.	.	.	44,000
America	.	.	.	114,000
Great Britain	.	.	.	869,000
Greece	.	.	.	12,000
Italy	.	.	.	494,000
Roumania	.	.	.	400,000
Serbia	.	.	.	369,000
France	.	.	.	1,398,515
<hr/>				3,700,515

This is the total for the Allies only, and takes no notice of civilian deaths resulting from the war, which reached an enormous total, nor of the losses of the Russian Empire, whilst the losses in the enemy

armies, and their civilian losses, as well as the losses, through submarine warfare, of the neutral countries, brings up the number of the dead to a stupendous figure. It is said that at least 20,000,000 deaths are attributable to this terrible War.

Then in the 41st chapter of Isaiah, in verses 14-16, we read: “Fear not, thou *worm* Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains (i.e., the big nations), and beat them small, and shalt make the hills (i.e., the little nations) as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.”

There are many other passages in the Bible setting forth that in the last days when the power of the Jewish nation should be at its lowest ebb and fitly described as a “worm”—an absolutely helpless creature—God would over-rule a world-wide war, that would break

out, to make it the means of setting free the land of Palestine and Jerusalem in preparation for the return of the Jews there, to resume their national life.

In Zechariah, the first chapter, we are shown a scene in heavenly places, and are allowed to listen to a conversation between the Lord and His angels! The talk is of Jerusalem, and an angel is very anxious to know when the Lord will have pity on "Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah." *His* thought is only of their short seventy years' captivity, but the Lord in His reply speaks of the final restoration of the Jewish nation in the then far distant time of the end. This is evident from the fact that the vision which is shown to Zechariah in answer, speaks of four horns, which are interpreted by the angel as being "the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem." Now at that time only one empire, Babylon, had been employed to scatter the Jews; of the rest, the Medo-Persian Empire had just risen to power, and the others, Greece and Rome, were hardly then in existence.

It is clear, therefore, that the answer leaps

forward over centuries to the Time of the End. The Lord then shows Zechariah "four carpenters" or "smiths," and when Zechariah asks what they come to do, he is told that whilst the four horns or world-empires "have scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head," yet these four smiths "are come to fray them" or carry out a policy of frightfulness against them, "to cast out the horns of the Gentiles which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it."

In other words, it would seem that four nations were apparently to arise who would wage a ruthless and frightful war against the remains of the old Roman Empire. And it is remarkable that in spite of the utmost efforts of our late foes, their number against us never exceeded four, Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, and Turkey, whilst their method of carrying on the war could hardly be more literally described than that of a policy of frightfulness !

The result would be the liberation of Jerusalem and Palestine, and as soon as that was

accomplished, the Armistice was signed, fighting ceased,

ELEVEN O'CLOCK STRUCK,

and the Final Hour of Gentile sovereignty over the earth was ushered in !

Forty-eight years ago, a great Bible student, Dr. H. Grattan Guinness, wrote a book entitled, *The Approaching End of the Age*. It has gone through fourteen editions, and amongst the many remarkable things stated by him, none is more remarkable than the following, which so clearly shows what an unerring guide as to future events the inspired Word of God is to all those who prayerfully study its pages. Written forty-eight years ago, little could the writer guess how dramatically "*the last warning bell*" would sound out when the long-looked for event of which he wrote, the deliverance of Syria from the Turks, should have been brought about !

The passage referred to is as follows : " We have noted various indications in the condition of Palestine and of Israel, and in the political events of our own day, which seem to indicate that the cleansing of the

sanctuary and the restoration of Israel are not distant. When these shall take place, when the Moslems, now driven out of Bulgaria, shall be driven also out of Syria, when the nations of Europe, actuated, it may be, by mutual mistrust and political jealousy, or it may be by higher motives, shall conspire to reinstate the Jews in the land of their fore-fathers,—*then the last warning bell will have rung*; then the last of the unfulfilled predictions of Scripture, as to events prior to the great crisis, will have received its accomplishment, then the second Advent of Israel's rejected Messiah to reign in conjunction with His risen and glorified saints as King over all the earth, will be close at hand, then the mystery of God will be all but finished and, the manifestation of Christ immediate. How long a time may be required to bring about this restoration of Israel—who shall say? *The destruction of the power and independence of the Ottoman Empire, like the annihilation of the temporal dominion of the Papacy, should be as a trumpet-blast to Christendom, proclaiming that the day of Christ is at hand.*”

Nearly fifty years have elapsed since these words were penned, and now we have been privileged to see “the destruction of the power and independence” of the Turkish Empire, for whatever little authority has been left to Turkey, the great Turkish Empire has now practically disappeared, all that is left being a small republican State with little political importance.

No sooner had this event happened, and an Armistice with Turkey been signed on October 31st, 1918, than ELEVEN days later “the last warning bell” rang out its fateful message!—“ELEVEN O’CLOCK”—the Midnight Hour had begun!

“ Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled ” (Luke xxi. 24).

“ And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever, that it shall be for a time, times, and an half ; and when He shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished ” (Daniel xii. 7).

CHAPTER II.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES.

JUST over 1,890 years ago, a little group of five people sat, one afternoon, on the slopes of Olivet, watching the sun lighting up the pinnacles and towers of the wonderful Temple buildings. Peter, James, John, and Andrew had got the Master to come apart privately, that they might question Him as to future events. Among the many other wonderful things that He revealed in response to their eager questions, He told them they were not to be troubled by the occurrence of wars, and rumours of wars, and outlined a long, long history of a troubled earth. But when a *world-wide* war should arise, and "nation should rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom," and this to be followed by many famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, *then* the beginning of the birth-throes of a new age would be upon us.

It was abundantly clear from the nature of this discourse that the warnings of the signs that should accompany the birth-throes of the

new Millennial Age were not meant for His hearers' ears alone, but were more particularly given for the enlightenment and guidance of their successors, those believers of the Church of Christ who should be alive on earth when the promised signs should take place. Hence we do well to take heed of them.

Now we have seen with our own eyes (1) a world-wide war; (2) an appalling pestilence covering the whole earth, over 400,000 are said to have died in the United States alone in three months; (3) an enormous increase in the number of great and devastating earthquakes in recent years; and (4) famine constantly threatening the lives of many millions of the earth's inhabitants.

There is no single sign wanting, to warn us that the birth-throes have begun, and then, to crown all, our Lord, after telling His eager listeners of the approaching total destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem itself, added those remarkable words: "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, *until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*" And now at last, after hundreds of years of treading-down, the desolating hand of the

Turk has been removed, Jerusalem is once more a city of life and liberty, and the liberating nation, through its official heads, has stated that it "views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object." If, then, the treading-down of Jerusalem is almost at an end, surely the Times of the Gentiles must be nearly fulfilled.

Supplementing His statement as to the signs that would accompany the closing days of the Times of the Gentiles, the Lord uttered a little parable about the fig-tree budding, and told His hearers that just as, when they saw the fig-tree bud, they knew that summer was surely coming, so, when they saw these things come to pass, they were to know that "the Kingdom of God" was "nigh at hand." Now, the fig-tree is continually used in the Bible to symbolise the national life of the Jews, thus the parable foretold that when the Jews should be seen to be assuming the responsibilities of nationhood again, it might be clearly known that the time for establish-

ing the great reign of Christ on earth was close at hand !

Now let us consider what the Lord meant by the phrase, “ The Times of the Gentiles.” Was it merely a descriptive term for an indefinite term or era of years during which the Gentile nations should rule over the earth ? The enquiry is one fraught with great interest to all who have the righteous government of this earth at heart, and those who desire to go into it fully, will find it discussed at great length in Dr. H. Grattan Guinness’s book, *Light for the Last Days*, of which a cheap edition has recently been published ; but here we want merely to make clear its broad outline, and to define from the Word of God its character, its length, and, in a later chapter, the special features of its final Hour.

“ The Times of the Gentiles,” then, is a clearly marked epoch of this world’s history in the Word of God. God’s purpose towards the human race has all along been one of infinite mercy, and when Adam, the elect man, failed to fulfil the aim for which he was created, of bringing joy to His Maker by a life of daily walking in communion with Him,

God sent the Flood in mercy to stop the propagation of sinful souls, and chose an elect family, Noah's, who should carry out His pre-ordained purpose of love. When Noah's family failed, He "separated" the nations of the earth, and still with the same unswerving purpose in view, chose an elect race, Abraham's race, the Jewish nation, through whom His purposes of grace towards a lost and ruined world might be made known, and who might be an example to the other nations of the earth of what a God-ruled nation should be.

He gave Abraham, moreover, an unconditional promise or covenant, that his seed should possess the land of Palestine, and all the country from the Nile to the Euphrates, and in the year 1917 B.C.,* according to Bible

* By making a simple calendar of years as shown on page 109, it will be seen that Abraham left Haran exactly 2,083 years from Adam's creation, and subtracting this figure from 4,000 B.C. gives 1917 B.C. as the year when the departure from Haran took place. To those who would remark that 4,004 B.C. was the date of Adam's creation, we would reply that our Lord's assumed birth in B.C. 4 is a Jesuitical error, contradicted by the evidence of many of the early fathers, and above all, by the evidence of the Bible itself. In Luke iii. 23 we read that "Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age," and looking back to the first verse of the chapter,

chronology, Abraham left Haran, in Mesopotamia, on the faith of that promise, and lived in the land which his seed was to possess.

God foresaw, however, that the rebelliousness of the Jewish race would cause them to turn aside from following His commands, and He warned them that when they did so, He would forsake them as a punishment for their sins, for a period of Seven Times. During this "seven times" He would allow the Gentile nations to work their will on the Jewish people, take possession of their land, and scatter them over the earth. But His covenant with Abraham still stood, and when the Seven Times was about to expire, He proceeded to make good His purpose, which He had given to Abraham in 1917 B.C., and in 1917 A.D., laid the foundation of the restoration of the Jewish nation in preparation for the Return in glory of their promised

we find that that year was "the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar." Now Tiberius came to the Imperial throne on the death of Augustus, and the date of Augustus' death is as well known as that, say, of Napoleon. It was August 19th, A.D. 14. Therefore the 15th year of Tiberius expired in A.D. 29, and some time in that year our Lord "began to be about thirty years of age." Hence our Lord was clearly born in B.C. 1.

King, by taking the long down-trodden city of Jerusalem from under the desolating heel of the Turks.

The mention of this Seven Times, during which the Jews were to be bowed down under the Gentile heel, is found all through the Word of God, both in type-picture and as a specific period of time. We shall only be able to speak of one or two of the principal references before passing on to consider the period itself.

In Leviticus xxvi., after speaking of the blessings that would fall on the Jewish nation, if they faithfully kept God's commandments, there follows a description of the terrible judgments that would fall upon the people if they walked contrary to God's statutes; and the warning is given that if they did not heed these judgments, but still continued to sin against God, the punishment would be one of sevenfold severity and extent. The words "seven times" occur in four places in the chapter, and in verse 24 God says: "Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet *seven*

times for your sins." Again in verse 28, the warning runs: "Then will I walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you *seven times* for your sins." Here there is a clear indication of a punishment that would certainly fall upon the Jewish nation for a period of Seven Times, if they persisted in a course of disobedience to God's commands.

Now let us turn to Daniel iv., and we shall find the same period symbolically mentioned, only here it has special reference to its aspect as affecting the Gentile nations of the world. Whilst the Jewish nation was to be punished by being "scattered" throughout the world, and deprived of their independence throughout this Seven Times period, the Gentile nations were to be given sovereignty over the world and the Land for this same period. And the nature of their rule was to be similar to that of a beast, that is, it was to be characterized by force. Dominion would be upheld, through all the changing phases of government, from absolute autocracy, limited monarchy, to democracy; alike by military and naval power, capturing and holding by

the sword, as a beast exercises his power by his teeth and claws.

So, in this wonderful chapter, we read the account of Nebuchadnezzar's second dream, in which he sees a tree of great height and grandeur. But a watcher from heaven gives command for it to be cut down, and only the stump left ; and in verses 16 and 17 the word continues : “ Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him ; and let *seven times* pass over him. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones ; to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.”

Here we are shown that the sovereignty of the world is all under God's control, and that, for a period of Seven Times, that sovereignty would be given to the Gentile nations, who would rule it like a beast rules ; that is, they would govern by force or military power. The same picture of the world's history had been given in an earlier dream to Nebuchadnezzar, under the image

of a great man formed of different metals and clay. In this previous dream he had seen world government as man sees it, as a grand thing, of glory and strength, giving scope for gratifying his ambition and lust of power.

Beside these symbolic mentions of this period of Seven Times, the period itself is specifically mentioned in its two half-portions, into which it was to be divided. In Daniel vii. 25 and in xii. 6, 7, the half period is spoken of as "a time and times and the dividing of time," and as "time times and an half." The latter passage reads as follows: "And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders ? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever, that it shall be for a time, times, and an half ; and when He shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." Here the period is given in its half portion of three-and-a-half times, in-

dicating the last half of the great Gentile week of Seven Times, during which the Jews were to be finally scattered over the world because of the treading-down of their land under the Saracen or Mohammedan invasion, and on the expiry of this time “ all these things shall be finished.”

Again, in Rev. xi., verses 2 and 3, the half period is referred to as “ 42 months,” “ and 1,260 days.” From these and other passages (such as Rev. xii. 6, 14; xiii. 5) it was easy to see that a “ time,” or prophetic Gentile “ day,” was a period of 360 years. For a careful comparison of the passages made it abundantly clear that actual days of twenty-four hours could not be meant, whilst forty-two months of thirty days each made the 1,260 days, or day-years; which period of 1,260 years is equal to half of the Gentile Week of Seven Times. Finally, “ time, times, and half a time,” taken as one time being equal to 360 days, two times being equal to twice 360 days, i.e., 720 days, and half a time being equal to half 360 days, i.e., 180 days, made also a total of 1,260 days or day-years. If, therefore, the half-period, or

three-and-a-half times, was 1,260 years, the whole period of Seven Times must be double that number, or 2,520 years.

Now, this period of 2,520 years is a very remarkable one. The figure is first of all the L.C.M., or Least Common Multiple, of all the numbers from 1 to 10; that is to say, you would have to go on counting up to 2,520 before you could find a figure into which you can divide every number from 1 to 10 without leaving any remainder!

Again, the Bible gives us the number 3 as the number of Divine perfection, the number 7 as the number of Spiritual perfection, 10 as the number of Ordinal perfection, and 12 as the number of Governmental perfection. A very casual study of numbers in the Word of God will serve to convince you of this. Now, if you multiply 3 by 7 by 10 and by 12, you get 2,520, which is the number of Chronological perfection, for the disclosure of the Perfection of the Divine, Spiritual Order of Government upon earth in the Millennial Reign of Christ!

So this wonderful number of years was fixed upon by God to govern the period of

time during which the Gentile nations would be permitted to rule the earth, till the punishment decreed upon the Jewish race should be fulfilled, and the time arrive for the carrying out of God's unconditional promise to Abraham and his seed.

The next point is to ascertain when this period was to begin, in order that we may know when to expect its end. Well, it is abundantly clear from the nature of the period, which was to be one of Gentile sovereignty over the Jewish nation and over the land, that its opening years must be found about the time that the kingdom of the Jews was being overthrown, and brought under the heel of the Gentile nations of the earth. There were several Gentile nations, such as the Egyptians, the Assyrians, etc., that at different times attacked the Jews, but it was the Babylonian Empire that completely subjugated them, captured their capital city, and indeed transported the nation to Babylonia, and "none remained but the poorest sort of the people of the land."

Suppose, then, with the view of finding our starting date for the Times of the Gentiles,

we enquire when this Empire of Babylon was founded: this is a well-known historical date, and we find it to be the 26th day of February, 747 B.C. This was the day when Nabonassar, king of Babylon, ascended the throne.

And, reckoning from this day onwards, through the period of the Babylonian Empire, through the existence of the Medo-Persian, and the Grecian Empires, which succeeded it, and on through the great Roman Empire that rose upon their ruins, right on to the last day of the reign of the last Roman Emperor, Romulus Augustulus, we arrive at the 22nd of August, A.D. 476. Then, reckoning up the years, we find that exactly 1,260 lunar years, or "time, times, and half a time," are included! Thus, the period of time occupied from the very first day of the existence of the empire that subjugated the Jewish nation, and took away its independence, to the very last day of the undivided Roman Empire, which completed the scattering of the Jews and the destruction of their city and temple, was exactly the space of $3\frac{1}{2}$ times of 360 lunar years each. So we see that the "four horns" or world-

empires that were to be allowed by God to "scatter" the Jewish nation as mentioned in the first chapter of Zechariah, lasted exactly half of the great Gentile period of seven times, even to a day !

Here we must pause to explain very shortly why lunar years are spoken of, and what they are. Lunar years are years governed by the motions of the moon, as solar years are governed by the sun. They are shorter than solar years, a lunar year being only 354 days, whilst a solar year is 365 $\frac{1}{4}$ days. Whilst the Western nations keep their calendar in solar years, the Jews and Mohammedans use the lunar years ; and the Jews, in order to bring their shorter year right with the sun, insert a thirteenth or intercalary month (called Ve-Adar) every third year.

Now, Eastern time being thus regulated by the moon, it was natural to expect that in its special aspect as referring to the Jews, the Times of the Gentiles would be measured in lunar years ; whilst, when we come to look at it in its aspect as referring to the Gentile nations, who keep solar time, and the ending of the period of their sovereignty

over the earth, we should expect to find it measured in its *full* length in solar years. We might note here that 1,260 lunar years, or $3\frac{1}{2}$ times, only fill up $1,222\frac{1}{2}$ solar years, so that 2,520 lunar years, or seven times, require the addition of 75 years to their solar equivalent of 2,445 years in order to equal 2,520 solar or Western calendar years. There is a reference to this in Daniel xii. 12, where the period of 1,335 days is given, and this is 1,260 days, or day-years, with 75 added.

Now, to resume our study, we have found a period of exactly $3\frac{1}{2}$ times, or half seven times, measured in lunar years, covers the history of the four great world-empires which were allowed by God, as graphically foretold by Daniel and Zechariah, to scatter the Jewish nation as a punishment for their sins in turning away from Him, and that this period is exact to a day !

But when we come to study further, we find that there is another period of exactly $3\frac{1}{2}$ times, or half the great seven times, measured also in lunar years, and dating from the *last* act of the final transportation of the Jewish nation and the burning of the

world-famous Temple of Solomon by Nebuchadnezzar, which took place in the year B.C. 587. From this date to the capture of Jerusalem by the Mohammedan conqueror Omar Pasha, in A.D. 637, again a period of exactly 1,260 lunar years, or $3\frac{1}{2}$ times, is found to have elapsed! Since that date, A.D. 637, Jerusalem has remained in the hands of its Mohammedan conquerors, with the exception of a short period of 88 years when the Crusaders precariously held it.

Now the question arises, which of these periods is the correct one? Shall we reckon the seven times as starting from the first year of the Babylonian Empire, B.C. 747; or shall we reckon it as starting from the year in which Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem, deported the people, and burnt Solomon's Temple, B.C. 587. The answer is, that we must take *both* dates into consideration.

“The Times of the Gentiles” is found to be a period that begins with an era, the captivity era of the Jews, or the space of time during which their power and nationhood were being gradually destroyed; and it ends with an era, the time of the end, or period

during which the way is being prepared for their emancipation from the down-treading heel of the Gentile nations, and the liberation of their land from its Mohammedan oppressors, in anticipation of their restoration as a nation in Palestine again. The era in the former case covered 160 years, from B.C. 747, the first year of the Empire of Babylon,* to B.C. 587, when the last remaining portion of the nation was deported by Nebuchadnezzar, and Jerusalem destroyed. So the last era, the time of the end, will be found to cover a like period, as we shall see when we come to consider the full period of the seven times in the next chapter.

We can, however, now see from this portion of our study why “the Times of the Gentiles” is more frequently referred to in Scripture in its sectional form of half weeks, or $3\frac{1}{2}$ days or times, because the full period of seven times *would* be so divided historically; the first $3\frac{1}{2}$ times being occupied by the existence of the four world-empires

* The first actual deportation of Jews was by Tiglath Pileser, King of Assyria, who came to the throne in B.C. 745—II. Kings xv. 29.

that would “scatter” the Jewish nation, and the last $3\frac{1}{2}$ times by the rise and existence of the two great apostacies, the Papal and Mohammedan powers, which, in the Western and Eastern divisions of the Gentile world, should hold sway, until, as the Times of the Gentiles were drawing to an end, their power should be gradually wasted away, to be finally destroyed at the Coming of Christ in glory.

“Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” (Romans xi. 25).

“Seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will” (Daniel iv. 32).

CHAPTER III.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES (*Continued*).

As this book is not intended for prophetic students, but a book for the man in the street, to help him to a truer knowledge of the stupendous happenings of the present time, we shall say nothing further on the divided aspect of the Times of the Gentiles, but confine ourselves to viewing the great seven times as a whole. At the end of this volume, however, will be found a list of books for those who desire to go into the subject more deeply.

Now we have seen that the seven times begin with an era, and end with an era. From striking events in the history of the *fall* of the Jewish nation in the period from B.C. 747 to B.C. 587, we can count forward 2,520 years with the certainty that in each case we shall find a corresponding striking event at the time of the end, in the *release* of the Jews from the terrible position of degradation and helplessness into which they fell. It will suffice for our purpose, however,

if we select two or three, and thus show that the era of the time of the end is rapidly drawing to a close, and with its expiry the great seven times will have run out to its appointed consummation and the “Times of the Gentiles” be fulfilled.

If we take the very first date, B.C. 747, which saw the accession of the first King of Babylon, and count forward 2,520 years, we come to the year A.D. 1774. That year saw the accession of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette in France ; and here we note that, just as the commencement of the Babylonian Empire appeared to bode no harm to the Jewish nation (indeed Hezekiah welcomed their ambassadors when they appeared at his court, as we learn from Isaiah xxxix.), so no apparent connection could be seen at the outset in this event which was the beginning of the time of the end ; and yet it had in it the seeds of the great French Revolution, in which this unhappy king and queen lost their lives. That revolution was the beginning of the crisis, which years later finally destroyed the temporal power of the great Western apostacy, the Papacy. It was the commencing

year of the great struggle for democracy which is only now reaching its climax.

As we have seen that the first half of the seven times was occupied by the existence of the four great world-empires, so the last half is occupied by the rise and existence of the two great apostacies, which were shown to Nebuchadnezzar under the form of the two legs of the great man, whose head was gold ; these finally turn into the feet, when clay begins to mix with the iron. The year 1774 seems to have seen the turn into the feet, and the first admixture of the clay.

So also, in the East, the great Eastern apostacy of Mohammedanism received its first mortal blow in 1774 ; for after disastrous defeats suffered by the Turkish Empire in conflict with Russia and Austria, the treaty of Kainardje was concluded, whereby large cessions of territory and the free navigation of the Black Sea were surrendered by Turkey. This commenced the “drying-up of the Euphrates,” or wasting away of the world’s great Mohammedan power, which has been going on ever since.

Many other striking dates in the history of

the gradual downfall of the Jewish nation could be traced forward to culminate, 2,520 years later, in a corresponding circumstance leading towards the resuscitation of the Jewish people from their long period of helplessness and woe. But we must satisfy ourselves with speaking of two dates, in the past history of Israel, pregnant with events that completed the final overthrow of this wonderful people, and that doomed them henceforth to be wanderers upon the face of the earth, scattered amongst the nations of the world, yet never assimilated by them, but preserving through all their terrible suffering those distinct and well-marked characteristics that enable anyone at a glance to point out a descendant of the race of Jacob.

The first of those dates is that of B.C. 606 which was the year in which Nebuchadnezzar, the greatest king of the Babylonian Empire, came to the throne, as co-regent with his father. The date is specially mentioned in Scripture, as being one of great importance both to the Jews and to the Gentile nations of the world, for the 25th chapter of Jeremiah begins thus: "The

word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, King of Judah, THAT* (the word is emphatic in the Hebrew) was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon ; the which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying . . .” Then follows a terrible prophecy of a seventy years’ desolation and captivity, to come upon the Jewish nation at the hands of this King Nebuchadnezzar, for their turning away from God after idolatry. It then goes on to foretell that when the seventy years were accomplished, God would punish the instrument (the Babylonian nation) which He had used to bring about the captivity of the Jewish nation, because of *their own* wickedness. And finally, the chapter foretells that in years to come, many other of the Gentile nations of the world would ill-treat the Jews,

* This emphatic pronoun THAT, seems to be placed here to emphasise the year indicated. Nebuchadnezzar reigned jointly with his father two years before he became sole monarch. So the THAT seems to show that B.C. 606 is the year indicated and not the year B.C. 604 when he began his sole reign.

and that they also should be punished in due time by means of a great world-wide war, which is very graphically depicted, which should spread "from nation to nation," so that there should be dead people "from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth."

That this war was connected with the down-treading of Jerusalem is further clearly stated in the following words, addressed to those nations which should try and keep out of this war: "For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by My Name" (that is, of course, Jerusalem), "and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of Hosts." Incidentally, we can see here why the worst troubles of the recent war seem to have fallen upon those nations (such as Russia and Roumania) which have been unceasing in their persecution of the Jewish race; whilst Great Britain, which repented many hundreds of years ago of her ill-treatment of the Jews, and has done all in her power to befriend them, was practically the

only warring European nation whose territory was kept inviolate from the enemies' armies.

We should, therefore, expect from the foregoing, that the date given at the head of this graphic chapter of the Bible, B.C. 606, would lead us forward after a lapse of 2,520 years to some events connected with a world-wide war, and especially, with Jerusalem and its recovery from its enemies' hands. And this is exactly what we *do* find. For we arrive at the year A.D. 1914, and find that the Gentile nations of the earth were engaged in a terrible world-wide struggle, that there are dead bodies as a result all over the world, even neutral nations suffering through submarine warfare and other causes, and that Jerusalem, after an uninterrupted treading-down by Gentile oppressors for the whole period, is released from its long thraldom in the course of this war by a nation which had previously expressed its intention of doing all in its power to assist in the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine !

The last of the important dates we shall mention in the history of the downfall of the Jewish nation, is the final one of that sad era.

It is the year B.C. 587. In that year, Nebuchadnezzar came up once more against the Land of Palestine, besieged Jerusalem, built forts against it, took it, burnt the city with fire, and destroyed Solomon's wonderful Temple on Mount Moriah. From this time the Jews, as an independent nation, ceased to exist: ever since, even when a small handful returned to Palestine from Babylon and subsequently multiplied, they have been always under the domination of one or other of the Gentile nations. This date, therefore, is a very important one, and as it is the year of the final subjection and scattering of the Jewish nation it should probably lead us, when we measure from it the length of the Times of the Gentiles, to the final date in the emancipation of this wonderful nation, and the final ending of the treading-down of the Holy City, Jerusalem.

When we count forward from this date for 2,520 years, we arrive at the yet future year, A.D. 1934. As this book deals with facts and not speculations, we shall not attempt to forecast the nature of the epoch-making events it may have in store.

It is, however, a curious fact, that, as we shall notice later on, this date A.D. 1934 is marked out more than once in the Bible as the terminus of other important periods. Whatever line of study we pursue, we find that almost invariably the period under consideration seems to expire around this remarkable date. It is evidently a crisis year of great magnitude, and in view of the appalling state of the world at the present time, and the terrible suffering and distress engulfing so many millions of earth's inhabitants, we may well hope and pray that this year A.D. 1934 may bring that lasting Peace for which the whole creation groans, but which the Word of God shows clearly will not come to pass through the Peace Treaty of Versailles, or any other man-made peace.

“ The Lord shall comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem ” (Zechariah i. 7).

“ Consider now from this day and upward, from the fourth and twentieth day of the ninth month . . . from this day will I bless you ” (Haggai ii. 18, 19).

CHAPTER IV.

THE RELEASE OF JERUSALEM.

JERUSALEM ! What memories does not the name recall ! Perched on its rocky eminence, 2,500 feet above the level of the sea, this little town (for its normal population was probably never above 100,000 persons, though vast crowds gathered there at special seasons, such as the Passover Feast), has a history accorded to no other city, not even Rome. Jerusalem was ancient when Rome was but a collection of mud huts. It is without question the most remarkable city in the world. As Besant and Palmer remark : " For Jerusalem has been the representative sacred place of the world there has been none other like unto it, or equal to it, or shall be, while the world lasts." It has survived twenty-seven sieges down all the long centuries. David took it, and Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and Titus of Rome, and Omar the Saracen, and Godfrey de Bouillon, its first Christian King, whose beautiful statue stands in the Palace Royale, Brussels. Did anyone in that unhappy

capital of Belgium, submerged so early in the cruel tide of the Great War, ever dream that it was *the War*, one of whose pre-ordained purposes was to procure the release from captivity of that other city, whose first Christian king they had delighted to honour ? a king of whom it was said that he was “ the only one of all the Crusaders whose life was pure, whose motives were disinterested, whose end and aim was the glory of God.”

Godfrey de Bouillon released the city of Jerusalem, to reign over it for less than one short year, but the King Whose Coming is the joyful expectation of tens of thousands of His subjects in every part of the world, is shortly to set up His reign over that same Holy City for a thousand years !

“ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not ! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, *blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.*”

That Day draws near apace! But those straining their eager eyes upon the watch-towers, for the first faint signs of the coming dawn, knew that the releasing of the Holy City must be one of the preparatory events to take place before the Coming of its rightful King!

For had not the "man greatly beloved," that wonderful aged Prime Minister of the great Babylonian Empire, Daniel, been told, when he sought to know more clearly the time when his beloved nation, the Jews, should again be permitted to possess the Land promised to their forefather, Abraham, and to return to their Holy City in peace, that whilst the words were "closed up and sealed till the time of the end," yet the happy Jew would be the one who was privileged to see the completion of a mysterious period of a "thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

In Daniel xii. 12, we read: "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." And from the fact that our Lord referred to a portion of this prophecy, when He spoke of

“the abomination of desolation” and the affliction that should overtake Jerusalem, it was surmised many years ago that this period had special reference to the time when Jerusalem would be set free from thraldom ; and probably indicated the year of its release.

It seemed likely that it referred to the calendar of the great Mohammedan Power which has held sway over Jerusalem for a far longer period than any other of its many conquerors. Now the Mohammedan calendar is a lunar one, and dates from the year of the Hegira, that of Mohammed’s flight from Mecca to Medina ; that is, the year A.D. 622, which the Mohammedans designate the year of Hegira. They have numbered their years regularly from this date, and on October 28th, 1916, celebrated the New Year Day of their year 1335. That year, a lunar one, came to an end on October 16th, 1917, and exactly a fortnight later, General Allenby burst through the Turkish lines at Beersheba, and commenced the glorious campaign that resulted, on December 9th, 1917, in the retaking of the Holy City ! Happy indeed, yea, blessed above many, was the descendant of Abraham,

Isaac, and Jacob, who lived to see that day for which his forefathers so ardently longed !

So certain was it from the inspired pages of the Bible that the year A.D. 1917 was thus marked out as one of great significance in this time of the end, that that great Bible student, Dr. H. Grattan Guinness, to whom we have already referred, had no hesitation in writing *over thirty years ago*, in his book, *Light for the Last Days*, the following words : " There can be no question that those who live to see this year 1917 will have reached one of the most important, perhaps the most momentous, of these terminal years of crisis."

It is interesting, too, to note that it was at Beersheba, the place of General Allenby's victorious advance, that Jacob took his farewell of that land from which the Jews were to be exiled so long during their stay in Egypt, that " furnace of iron " that was to weld them into a nation and prepare them for their destined purpose.

But not only was the place of re-entry of the land divinely planned to be at Beersheba, and the very year marked out in God's Word

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thousands of years ago, but *the very day* too was prophesied and clearly written, so that there should be no excuse for unbelief, but rather the clearest evidence that God's hand was over-ruling all the awful course of this terrible war, so that "the wrath of man shall praise Him," and His determined purposes be carried out to their predestined issues.

In the second chapter of Haggai, there is a very remarkable prophecy, which in its scope and outlook very evidently refers to the time of the end. It speaks in verse 7 of a great shaking of all nations, and it is probably to this chapter that our Lord refers when, after saying that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles until the Times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled, He goes on to say: "For the powers of heaven shall be shaken."

Thus He drew the attention of His disciples to this chapter, and in it, after saying that the latter glory of the Temple should be greater than in Solomon's days, and that in Jerusalem He would give peace, a date is given, reiterated very strikingly no less than three times—"the four and twentieth day of

the ninth month"—in verses 10, 18, and 20. Verse 20 reads: "Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's Temple was laid, consider it. Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree hath not brought forth: from this day will I bless you."

Now these trees are used as types of the Jewish nation all through Scripture. The vine is constantly used as a type of the Jewish nation loved and cared for by God; the fig-tree, of their existence as a nation; the pomegranate (which figured on the High Priest's dress), of their Temple worship; the olive tree, of their fruitfulness as a missionary nation in time to come. Although in none of these aspects should the Jews yet have blossomed out, yet God promises that from this special day "the four and twentieth day of the ninth month," He will proceed to bless them.

Then follows a graphic description of a shaking of the heavens and the earth, and an

overthrow of the throne of kingdoms and a destruction of the strength of the kingdoms of the nations. "The chariots," i.e., forms of government, are to be overthrown, and "those that ride in them," i.e., the rulers of the nations: and that the shaking is to be accomplished by means of a world-wide war is evident from the statement that it will be "every one by the sword of his brother."

Now the Jews keep a lunar calendar, as we have before remarked, and as it is a prophecy of Jewish history we must look in their calendar for the above date. And when we turn up the Jewish calendar for the year 1917, we find that the day on which Jerusalem was surrendered—that is, Sunday, December 9th, in our calendar—was, in their calendar, the very day here prophesied, "the four and twentieth day of the ninth month!"

When we remember that God so ordained, that the burning of Solomon's wonderful Temple (which took place on the ninth of Ab) by Nebuchadnezzar, should be paralleled by the burning of Herod's Temple by Titus on the very same day (the ninth of Ab), after an interval of over 600 years, we might

almost have expected that the special day of blessing to the Jewish nation spoken of by Haggai, at the time of their return from the Babylonish captivity, should recur on the very same date in these latter days, when the prophecy is apparently about to receive its final fulfilment.

But it surely indicates to us that God's pre-ordained purposes, both regarding the Jews and the Gentiles, are coming to pass before our eyes, and we may remember our Lord's words : " For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled."

Does it not make us marvel at the unerring accuracy of God's Holy Word, which thus held hidden in its pages the very year and the very day of the release of Jerusalem from its age-long thraldom ! God alone knows the future, and His challenge in that very 41st chapter of Isaiah which speaks, as before quoted, of the deliverance of the Jew by His mighty power, remains unanswered : " Produce your cause, saith the Lord : bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob.

Let them bring them forth, and *shew us what shall happen*: let them shew the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them: or *declare us things for to come*. *Shew the things that are to come hereafter*, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil that we may be dismayed, and behold it together.”

The events of this world-wide war, and its results, are an incontrovertible proof of the existence of an All-Wise, Omniscient Deity, Who is over-ruling the wrath and wickedness of man, and bringing His own pre-ordained purposes of mercy to pass, through all the welter and confusion of the present time. Shall we not then be wise, and listen to His Word, and take warning ere it be too late. For as surely as His mercy has been extended through all the long years of the Gospel Dispensation, so surely is the Day of Vengeance looming in the near future for unrepentant sinners. “None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.” The “wise” are those who walk in the fear of the Lord, and read and obey His

Holy Word. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

"Wherefore He saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

NOTE.—Many stories are in circulation, some of them very circumstantial, of prayer-meetings being held, and telegrams regarding prayer passing, prior to the release of Jerusalem. We have it, however, on the direct authority of Lord Allenby himself, that these stories are "entirely without foundation." The story of the release of the Holy City is quite wonderful enough, when viewed in the light of the prophetic Word, without any such apocryphal addenda.

“ Praise ye Him, sun and moon : praise Him,
all ye stars of light ” (Psalm cxlviii. 3).

“ And fearful sights and great signs shall there
be from heaven ” (Luke xxi. 11).

“ And there shall be signs in the sun, and in
the moon, and in the stars ” (Luke xxi. 25).

CHAPTER V.

CELESTIAL SIGNS.

WHEN our Lord gave utterance to that remarkable prophecy about Jerusalem being trodden down of the Gentiles until the Times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled. He immediately went on to describe the state of the world when those times should be about to expire, and Jerusalem to be released from her long thralldom.

The words used were these: “And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars ; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity ; the sea and the waves roaring ; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.”

We have seen that the last clause of this statement is almost certainly a reference to the second chapter of Haggai, and to the date of Jerusalem’s release. It is also pretty clear to most people that “distress of

nations" exists just now on earth in a very aggravated form, and that everywhere "men's hearts are failing them for fear." That Anarchy, Bolshevism, and unrest of every kind, are rife in almost every quarter of the globe, is a fact that will hardly be disputed.

It may not, however, have been so apparent that this striking phase of human existence on earth,—which was to come about when the period assigned to Gentile sovereignty over the earth was on the point of expiring, and the release of Jerusalem in preparation for the Return of her rightful King to be accomplished—has been accompanied by the promised "signs" in the celestial regions.

That the "signs" were to be literal celestial phenomena, and not figurative, is clear from a careful perusal of our Lord's words. And that, whilst they would be clearly recognisable, yet they would *not* be of such an extraordinary nature that all the world would be startled by them, is to be inferred from the fact that the transcendent event of our Lord's First Coming was accompanied by celestial phenomena that

were recognised only by a faithful, watching few !

And when “ the chief priests and scribes ” were assembled for the express purpose of hearing the story of some of these humble watchers, they cared so little about it, that they made no attempt to verify the heaven-sent sign. Hence, we should expect the same to-day, only more so, because the Lord Himself drew such a terribly sombre picture of the almost entire lack of faith in His Return which would precede that glorious event. His sad question runs : “ When the Son of Man cometh, will He find faith on the earth ? ”

A London Vicar in the course of his sermon the other day said : “ Early Christians were foolish enough to believe that the Lord was soon coming, and there are such people to-day.” Thank God, there was one among the congregation bold enough to testify to his Lord, for the words were hardly uttered before a young man got up, and holding his Bible high above his head, walked silently out of the building.

Nevertheless, the promised “ signs ” oc-

curred both before, and after, the release of Jerusalem. In August, 1917, three months before the city's release, the Australian Government thought one celestial phenomenon so striking as to be worth cabling to this country for the information of the Australian troops. In the issue of *The Anzac Bulletin* for August 29th, 1917, the weekly paper published by the Australian Government for the Australian Imperial Force, there occurs the following paragraph :—

REMARKABLE METEORIC DISPLAY.

Melbourne, 21st August.

“ There was a remarkable meteoric display at midnight : a huge serpent-like tail swept across the sky, and underwent a series of fantastic movements, swooping towards the earth, and finally tapering off towards the north, leaving a thin cloud in its wake. Witnesses describe it as an awe-inspiring spectacle. The observatory fixes the duration of the display at three minutes.”

Earlier still, about eighteen months before the war began, another extraordinary meteoric display was seen, which a well-known

astronomer describes in a letter to us in these words :

“ The most remarkable meteor or cluster of meteors ever seen was on February 9th, 1913. The phenomenon really consisted of hundreds of meteors flaming across the sky in a stream for three or four minutes. This was observed over an extent of 5,500 miles of the earth’s surface, chiefly Canada.”

Now to appreciate the full significance of these displays, you should go out to-night with your watch in your hand, and, looking up to the sky, imagine you see “ a stream of hundreds of meteors flaming across the sky,” and stand gazing until three minutes have elapsed by your watch. I think you will then agree that had you been privileged to see it, you would never have forgotten the sight, and would have felt that the word “ awe-striking ” was too faint to express the emotion which such a sight would have stirred up in your mind. Meteors are, of course, common enough, but a meteor that lasts even as long as one second is a wonderful sight ; what of a meteoric display that lasts 180 seconds !

In the very same year, too, 1917, as the first-mentioned meteoric phenomenon, a remarkable number of sun-spots occurred, and in August the sunspot area on the sun was greater than ever known in the history of the Greenwich Observatory records. Whitaker's Almanac for 1918 has the following about it : "The year 1917 was marked by the appearance of several groups of unusually large size, and in the middle of August the total spotted area of the sun was larger than in any period of the Greenwich record, which began in the year 1874."

The *Daily Mail* of July 28th, 1923, has the following under the heading "Is the earth a Jelly ?" : "The earth, in fact, is behaving as if it were a jelly-like substance and not a sphere rigid as steel. It would follow that the difference between various points on its surface is shifting slightly. .

"Similar fluctuations in recent years have been observed on the surface of the moon ; in fact, something very queer is happening in the solar system, because even the sun seems to have been infected by the new astronomical complaint.

"Whether it is serious remains to be seen."

The Times of June 20th, 1923, commenting on the unusual phenomena occurring recently, had the following in a long editorial on the subject :

"It is for men of science to inform us, if they can, whether any, and what, connexion exists between the remarkable disturbances in the normal course of Nature which have marked the last few months. The plain man can hardly fail to be struck by their coincidence."

A recent article in *Chamber's Journal*, by John Ross, M.A., gives some striking coincidences of planetary motion in connection with the recent war, of which the following is perhaps the most startling, and it also occurred in the great crisis year, 1917, which saw the release of Jerusalem.

"In 1917 the sun entered *Aries*, marking the commencement of Spring, on 21st March at 4.37 a.m. (Greenwich time). At this moment of ingress all the nine planets were beneath the horizon of London. The

chances against the nine planets being thus all below the horizon at any one point of time are five hundred and eleven against one, certainly a very large balance. But that is not all. By 6 a.m. (*i.e.*, an hour and a half after the moment of ingress) six of the planets had risen—namely, MOON, URANUS, VENUS, MARS, SUN, and MERCURY. Even if no restriction is laid down, the chance of any six planets whatever, being simultaneously in the ascendant, is no higher than one in thirty-five thousand five hundred and forty-seven. Therefore, even if we include all the four seasons of the year, such a concentration of planets in the ascendant as occurred at London at the spring equinox of 1917 cannot mark the commencement of a season oftener upon an average than *about once in nine thousand years.*"

The fall of meteorites on the earth is a fairly common occurrence, but the one that fell on November 27, 1919, seems to have been of extraordinary size, and from the following description given by the correspondent of the *Daily Mail* to have been of a phenomenal nature:—

GIANT METEORITE.

PLUNGE INTO LAKE MICHIGAN.

New York, Friday.

“ What eye-witnesses and astronomers agree must have been a gigantic meteorite fell in Lake Michigan last night. When it hit the water it sent up a pillar of flames 100 feet high, the reflection of which was seen by the inhabitants of three States. It created at the same time a fog of steam. At many western Michigan cities the earth trembled and buildings were shaken, the inhabitants rushing into the streets.

“ The meteorite was seen by thousands as a great ball of fire, white and orange, descending towards the lake. The lighthouse-keeper near by describes how he saw it fall. ‘ I could clearly hear the roar of its passage through the air,’ he said.”

Away in the South Atlantic Ocean, some 15 months later, a very striking phenomenon was noticed, the following account is from *The Times* of Feb. 21st, 1922 :—

A GREAT BALL OF FIRE.

STRANGE STORY OF THE SEA.

(From Our Correspondent.)

New York, February 20th.

On arriving in New York to-day from the River Plate the officers of the Lamport and Holt liner *Vauban* described the appearance of a huge ball of fire which passed across the Southern Hemisphere on the night of Wednesday, January 11.

Its appearance has aroused much interest among astronomers in Brazil, the Argentine, and Uruguay, and a special report of the event has been prepared for transmission to Great Britain by Captain Anthony Cadogan, the master of the *Vauban*.

When the vast mass of light appeared Mr. Francis C. Blessing was in command on the bridge. He describes the ball of light as having been about the size of the full moon.

“When I first observed it it was 10deg. above the western horizon. It illuminated the ocean over a distance of some 500 yards. The light it shed was so brilliant that many

passengers rushed out on deck to inquire the cause.

“ It took about $3\frac{1}{2}$ minutes to cross from horizon to horizon, and while it lasted one could easily read the print of a newspaper. Behind the body itself, stretching for about 10deg., was an enormous tail, full, wide, and brilliant. This tail was dissipated when the ball of fire was within 20deg. of the eastern horizon, beneath which it disappeared.”

The following description of another phenomenon is from *The Daily Mail* of March 15th, 1924:—

SUN PILLAR.

PHENOMENON IN S.E. ENGLAND.

A remarkable “ sun pillar ” was seen in the south-east of England about sunset on Thursday evening, state the Meteorological Office.

Near Turnham Green Station, Chiswick, W., the pillar was first noticed at 5.45, when it formed a whitish vertical streak equal in width to the sun and reaching up to 5deg. above it. The sun’s disc was strangely distorted before it disappeared at 5.49.

As the pillar moved northwards it became patchy and assumed a pink-shade. It was

last seen through the smoke-haze at 6.9, ten minutes after the official time of sunset.

Near Tunbridge Wells the pillar was in sight up to about 6.15.

The following reported in the daily press of October 4th, 1923, is interesting :—

BURSTING METEOR.

OBSERVER TEMPORARILY BLINDED.

An interesting description of a meteor of extraordinary brilliancy has been received from the commander of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's *Orbita*, which arrived yesterday at Southampton from New York. In the official report (which was sent to the United States Hydrographic Office, New York) appears the following :

“ In latitude 46deg. 12min. N., longitude 18deg. 43min. W. at 5.55 a.m. G.M.T., a meteor of extraordinary brilliancy was observed travelling at a great speed from the direction of the constellation of Pegasus through Cassiopeiæ and vanishing in the vicinity of the Great Bear.

“ The meteor appeared to burst in the region of Cassiopeiæ, illuminating the heavens from horizon to horizon. Such was the vivid-

ness of the flash that the observer was temporarily blinded, being unable to see for about five minutes. The meteor appeared to be about four times the size of Sirius, and for a period of about twenty minutes, after its passage, a brilliantly luminous, vaporous gas remained in the sky, marking the meteor's trail."

Another curious phenomenon was reported in *The Daily Mail* of August 26th, 1923, as follows :—

TRADE WINDS ASTRAY.

CEASING TO BLOW IN SOUTHERN PACIFIC.

The trade winds seem to have gone on strike. So persistent have been these winds, blowing towards the equator from the north-east in the northern hemisphere and the south-east, in the southern hemisphere that they have been held by many generations of sailors to stand for reliability.

Now something has gone wrong, and according to an officer of the Remuera, of the New Zealand Steamship Company, the trade winds have ceased to blow in the South-East Pacific.

"Landsmen cannot appreciate the sensation this phenomenon has caused among

sailormen," said he. "It is just as if the electrical power station at Chelsea ceased working and stopped the Underground trains."

Though ball lightning is a recognised form of electrical discharge, the display chronicled in a correspondent's letter in *The Times* of December 23, 1922, seems quite out of the ordinary.

BALL LIGHTNING.

"There was in this locality on December 18, between 6 and 8 p.m., an extraordinary display of the so-called ball lightning. The phenomenon took the form of balls of bluish, misty flame, which either hovered stationary or darted about the heavens in a curiously irregular manner. Vivid lightning of the ordinary kind accompanied the display, which must have lasted at least two hours. As a close observer of the sky for over fifty years, I have never before witnessed such a spectacle."

The following occurs amongst the letters from correspondents to *The Times*, of Thursday, August 21st, 1924, and seems to record a rather unusual event :

SKY-GAZING.

On Saturday evening, about 10 p.m., I was

on the pier at Ryde, and was gazing at the moon, which was peculiarly brilliant, just above an inky indigo cloud and the bright planet of Mars shining close by. On looking round to the west there was a sight I have never seen before in any part of the world, a lunar rainbow with a perfect arch and the prismatic colours dimly visible. Many people on the pier were also looking at this wonderful phenomenon, and it is curious that no mention has been made of it by others, as such a sight must be a very rare occurrence indeed.—

REAR-ADMIRAL.

An extract from the *Daily Express* tells of another form of atmospheric disturbance which, though common enough, yet seems in this instance to have been of quite exceptional if not unparalleled intensity :—

SHIPS SUCKED UP TO THE SKIES.

ASTOUNDING STORY OF A WATERSPOUT.

(“*Daily Express*” Correspondent.)

Paris, Sunday, September 3.

“A waterspout in the Tyrrhenian Sea (between the islands of Corsica and Sardinia and Italy) is reported by the *Petit Parisien* to have drawn two fishing boats, with seven

men on board, up to the skies until they disappeared completely.

A storm threatened a fishing fleet, and the boats were hurriedly seeking shelter when a terrific waterspout appeared and scattered them.

Two boats were caught by the spout ; the rest escaped.”

Our Lord said there should be “ signs . . . in the moon,” and the following extract from Dr. Crommelin’s report on a lunar eclipse in 1921 shows that the moon is a long way out of her computed position in the sky :

“ We find that the moon is now twelve seconds of arc away from the nautical almanack position. Unknown influences are acting on the moon, which disturb, and some day we may find out what they are. For some time now the moon has been a long way out of her computed place. It has been decided to publish entirely new tables of the moon in the Almanack for 1923. These tables will represent more accurately the moon’s position, but even these cannot give it properly.”

The following extracts are from the *Daily Mail* of October 21st, 1921 :—

The eclipse of the moon has not revealed living creatures in the moon, but it has nevertheless disclosed certain very surprising facts.

It has proved that the moon is not only very slightly out of its proper course, but is also, by a distinct and perceptible distance, ahead of its proper position in that course.

This is the more extraordinary because the position of celestial bodies is determined with amazing accuracy, and their movement proceeds with almost unfailing regularity.

“ Reckoning a second of arc as one of our miles, the moon has ‘ deviated ’ 12 miles,” Dr. A. C. D. Crommelin, who took observations of the eclipse from Greenwich Observatory, stated yesterday to a *Daily Mail* reporter. “ Actually it is slightly more ahead, and the distance is quite a big one for astronomers.”

SPEEDING-UP PERIOD.

Dr. Crommelin produced a table which showed that the erratic behaviour of the moon had begun quite 30 years ago. In the first few years of this period it gained only half-a-mile, but later it quickened its pace, as the following figures prove, which

give the distance ahead of calculated position at various dates :—

1894	1.20 secs.	1915	12.4 secs.
1908	5.97 secs.	1921	well over 12 secs.
1912	9.79 secs.		

Terrific hail storms are also a feature of the present time. The one detailed below is an instance. The writer possesses a photo of some of the hailstones that fell in this storm, and they are of prodigious size.

Evening Times and Echo, Thursday,
December 27th, 1923.

HAIL “CRICKET BALLS”

SMASH ALMOST EVERY TILED ROOF IN
FASHIONABLE SUBURBS.

POOR FOLK FARED BETTER.

Johannesburg, Wednesday.

(received to-day).

Scarcely a tiled roof remains in Sunnyside and Arcadia, the fashionable suburbs of Pretoria, as the result of a hail storm. The stones were as large as cricket balls, and tiled roofs of the most expensive houses were smashed, the inmates being compelled to take shelter in the cheaper houses, with corrugated iron roofs, of neighbours.

Gardens were wiped out, and electric lighting and telephones failed. The damage is enormous.—Central News.

The following is from the *Morning Post* of August 9th, 1926:— Rangoon, August 7th.

A message from Akyab states that the Commander of the *Chakdina* has reported that on the morning of July 29th he sighted a great sheet of flame, rising several hundred feet high, and burning for about 15 minutes. The flame reappeared ten minutes later at a position 19°5 north and 93°4 east.

Then in the year 1925, no less than eleven comets were reported! This is the largest number of comets that has ever been reported in a single year.

Thus the words “fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven” are coming to pass, but in addition to these extraordinary occurrences, there has been a literal fulfilment of our Lords’ words: “And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences.”

The frequency and destructiveness of recent earthquakes has been very noticeable. They

follow one another with great rapidity, so that each month usually sees several occur in different parts of the world.

The earthquake which occurred in China in December, 1920, is described as the worst earthquake in human history, and is said to have literally shaken the globe, bringing death in its train to about a quarter of a million people. Quite recently in New Zealand earthquake shocks were felt over an almost continuous period of forty days. The fearful devastation in Tokio and Yokohama in September, 1923, by a terrific earthquake is fresh in our memory.

During the last six months of 1925 no less than thirty-eight earthquakes have been recorded by the daily press !

Whilst the following extract from the *Daily Chronicle*, of June 30th, shows how earthquakes have recently occurred almost simultaneously in several Continents :—

A HEMISPHERE SHAKEN.
DEADLY FREAKS OF THREE-DAYS'
EARTHQUAKES.
EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA.

Earthquake shocks and seismograph read-

ings, first recorded during the week-end (as in *The Daily Chronicle* reports) by Mr. J. J. Shaw, of West Bromwich, have now spread over three Continents.

Great damage in the Near and Far East, especially the Isles of Rhodes, in the Mediterranean, and Sumatra, between the Pacific and Indian Oceans, has been accompanied by disturbances elsewhere. Among the reports are these :—

ANGORA, CAPITAL OF TURKEY.—Two minutes' shock. Ten houses and a mosque at Fethrai destroyed. Inhabitants out in the open in tents.—Central News.

CAPE TOWN.—Shock at Salisbury, Rhodesia, Tuesday morning, lasted five seconds. Furniture and pictures thrown down.—Ex. Tel. Co.

VOSGES, EAST FRANCE.—Subterranean rumblings. Shocks at Belfort and Mulhouse. No more serious damage than broken crockery and glass.—Central News.

REMIREMONT, EAST FRANCE.—Houses damaged.—Ex. Tel. Co.

HEIDELBURG, GERMANY.—Observatory states that the shock lasted two minutes. Earthquakes in this locality in 1511 caused great damage.—Ex. Tel. Co.

BADEN.—Shock lasted a few seconds. No great damage.—Central News.

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA.—The shocks already reported in Egypt and Greece were recorded at Riverview Observatory here between 6 and 7 on Saturday morning. The shocks felt in Singapore were recorded at 1,28 p.m. on Monday.—Reuter.

Then the earthquake that occurred this month (August, 1926) in England seems to have been the most extensive ever known.

The following is an extract from the *Daily Mail* of August 16th, 1926 :—

ENGLAND SHAKEN BY EARTHQUAKE.
TREMORS FELT IN 22 COUNTIES.

MOST EXTENSIVE KNOWN IN BRITAIN.

PEOPLE'S 5 A.M. RUSH FROM HOUSES.

HOUSES SWAY AND CEILINGS COLLAPSE.

An earthquake shock was felt in 22 English counties at 4.58 yesterday morning.

It is believed to be by far the most extensive

disturbance of the kind ever experienced in Great Britain, the tremors being felt over 16,000 square miles, or almost one-third of the total area of England and Wales.

Although many hundreds of thousands of people must have been wakened by the oscillation, which was very violent in some places, houses and other buildings being so shaken that parts of ceilings fell in and walls were cracked, not one person is reported to have been injured.

Famines, too, of terrible extent have taken a fearful toll of human life in Central Europe and China at the present time, the one in Russia being said to be the worst ever known, in which millions of human beings perished, whilst, "pestilences" like influenza, typhus, and other diseases, have ravaged many countries of the earth with great severity.

The following extract from the *Daily Mail* of February 26th, 1924, speaks of one of these new diseases :—

SLEEPY SICKNESS.

Doctors confessed to a *Daily Mail* reporter that they were helpless to control this mysterious disease, which was first observed

in Vienna in 1917, then in Paris, and the following year in London. It has since appeared in nearly all civilised countries, and is regarded as being due to some unknown germ, but not at all or only very slightly infectious. A hospital physician said :—

“ Sleepy sickness is a very fatal disease. The deaths of those attacked range from 20 to 30 per cent. of those who recover. The majority suffer disabling consequences such as drowsiness in the day and restlessness at night, tremors, pains in the limbs, speech defects, and drooping of the eyelids.

“ The worst consequence of all is change in character, well-behaved, honest, and truthful children becoming mischievous, thievish, and untruthful. Some of these children have found their way to the police courts.”

Thus all the different classes of signs given by our Lord as portents of His near Return are being fulfilled at the present moment, Celestial signs, earthquakes, famines and pestilences all unite in heralding the birth-throes of the new Millennial age, and the approaching Return of Him Whose right it is to rule over the whole world, and Whose

Coming will bring peace to this sorely-tried earth, and usher in that glorious period of which the Word of God gives such a glowing picture.

But beyond these striking phenomena, a still more remarkable one, a new "Star in the East," was vouchsafed to fill with joy the hearts of expectant watchers; this will be fully described in the next chapter. Before, however, we go further, it may be of advantage here to note the important statements made in God's Word about the starry heavens.

God gave two revelations to His earthly creatures. One is written in the Word of God, which we call the Bible, the other is written in the heavens. The latter was the first given; it was Abraham's Bible, he had no written book to study, but he could sit at his tent door and read the story of God's wonderful redemption written in the starry heavens above him. In the 147th Psalm (R.V.) we read: "He telleth the number of the stars; He giveth them all their names." So that we know they were originally named by God. Many of their God-given names are now lost to us, but where they have been

preserved, they all tell the same story of a Saviour coming first to suffer and then to reign.

Now in Romans x. 17, 18, we read : " So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. But I say, Have they not heard ? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Here St. Paul is quoting from the 19th Psalm to show how people knew of God's plan of redemption in the olden time, and when we turn to this Psalm we find the words quoted refer to the starry heavens as being the source of the message heard. " The heavens declare the glory of God : and the firmament sheweth His handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun ; which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race."

The first half of this beautiful Psalm is

devoted to the Book of the Heavens, and the last half to the Book of the Word of God. By the words "In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun," are indicated the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac, through which the sun appears to travel in the course of a year, and in each of which he tabernacles consecutively through the months of the year.

And where we can trace back the original names of the Zodiac, and the starry constellations that compose them, we find that they all tell forth the story of God's wonderful plan of redemption for fallen man.

These facts which show us that God wrote the book of the stars to tell His purpose of love before the Bible was in existence, make it more than ever likely that He should again use that glittering galaxy of the night to tell out the glad news of the approach of Christ's Millennial Reign !

“ When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy ” (Matt. ii. 10).

CHAPTER VI.

THE STAR IN THE EAST.

WHEN the greatest event that has ever happened on this earth took place, over 1,900 years ago, there was no cataclysm of nature to announce the approach of that marvellous day, when the Messiah should be born. But God caused a star to appear and gladden the eyes of those who were quietly watching for the fulfilment of His Word, and knew that the day foretold was surely drawing near !

Very few were doing so ; in fact, the religious world of those days, like the religious world of this present time, " the chief priests and scribes," were wholly oblivious and utterly careless of the birth of the Divine Child.

It was therefore reasonable to believe that it was quite possible that God would repeat the phenomenon when the time drew near for the Messiah to return. So, early in 1918, we remarked to a friend : " I should not wonder if we see a star appear again soon." And on Saturday, June 8th, at 10 p.m., a

star, that probably had been previously unnoticed for its insignificant magnitude, suddenly blazed out till it became the most conspicuous object in the northern sky. Now new stars, or *novæ*, as they are called, are not rare things, but *novæ* of the first magnitude are very uncommon. Yet there have been some reported in the last 2,000 years, and it was not the advent of the star, simply as such, that made its appearance so extraordinary; but the time of its appearance, and the circumstances surrounding it, that marked its advent as an outstanding one.

The following extracts are from *The Times* of Tuesday, June 12th, 1918:—

“ The appearance of a new star in the constellation, Aquila, to which the Astronomer Royal (Sir Frank Dyson) drew attention in *The Times* of Monday, has excited a great deal of interest. The present is certainly the most brilliant temporary star that has shone in the firmament since the celebrated one of 1604. There have been many new stars in that long interval, but they have been fainter, and generally considerably fainter, except in the case of the one which made its appearance

in Perseus on February 22nd, 1901. . . *The new star will assuredly form one of the chief astronomical events of our time.* It must represent an occurrence, possibly a catastrophe of enormous magnitude in the inconceivably remote fields of sidereal space."

Again, in the same issue of *The Times*, in another column, the following occurs in an article by a correspondent on "The New Star."

"A great white star has swam into our ken, and it comes at a moment when humanity is looking for a new world. Certainly a new star of the first magnitude, discovered by several eyes at once, and promptly vouched for by Greenwich, is a portent. Can we say more? May we hail it as an omen of victory in the great struggle between Might and Right? Would that we could! But the days are over when mankind felt a temptation to associate heavenly phenomena with the great events of history. When in 1572 Tycho Brahe observed a new and brilliant star, which in December 1573 shone like Jupiter, Theodore Beza thought it predicted the Second Coming of our Lord, but with its

disappearance that hope failed also. Yet Tycho's star ushered in the most brilliant period of English history, and perhaps this new star, which is believed to be 'perfectly stellar,' is an event on the threshold of our new age. . . . Here has come . . . a great white star, of a character unknown in the records of literature or science, a star that might be likened to a petal plucked from Dante's paradisal rose. Surely here, for the mystic mind, is an intimation of hope, not to this monarch or that, nor even to that nation or this, but to mankind at large, even as the Star of Bethlehem was an intimation that a new age was opening for the wearied sons of men. The star comes at a moment not altogether incomparable with that moment of the birth of Christ when the Roman world was sated. It has come when the world is again at a turning point. . . ."

Thus did the correspondent of the great London journal describe the Advent of this star. And now let us see how, apart from its being "one of the chief astronomical events of our time," certain extraordinary coincidences of its appearance mark it out with

great probability, as one of the promised "signs."

(1) The Star appeared on Saturday night, June 8th, 1918, exactly on the completion of *six months* to a day from Sunday, December 9th, the day when Jerusalem was surrendered !

Now if you will turn to the first chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, you will see there, that the angel Gabriel was sent to Jerusalem to a priest named Zacharias in the Temple, to announce to him that he would shortly be the father of one who was to be the herald to the Jewish race of their long-expected Messiah. Then in the 26th verse we read : "And in the *sixth month* the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth." This time the announcement was of the approaching Birth of a Saviour, and in making the announcement to Mary, Gabriel expressly emphasized to her, "and this is *the sixth month* with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible."

Thus, twice over, is the fact stated, of its being in the sixth month from his first visit to Zacharias that he again appeared to Mary.

Note, too, that his first visit was to *Jerusalem*, his second "in the sixth month" to Nazareth. His first visit was to *Jerusalem* to announce the coming birth of a herald whose mission it should be to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord," his second to Nazareth to announce the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; and it may be almost taken as certain that it was at the moment of his second visit "in the sixth month" that there appeared "His star in the east" to the watchful gaze of the expectant Magians.

Here then, even as *The Times* correspondent remarks, only perhaps without realising the full significance of his words, "The star comes at a moment not altogether incomparable with that moment of the birth of Christ." We have first a unique portent in *Jerusalem* itself, that city being released after so many centuries of thraldom, the birth of a sign or herald to the Jewish nation that their long night of "desolation" is almost over; and then exactly at the close of the sixth month from that epoch-making event, a star blazes out for a short time to herald, we may surely

hope, the near Return of our long-expected Redeemer. "And unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

(2) But there is more than this in the resemblance, for the star rose *due east*. Mr. Maunder, of Greenwich Observatory, is reported in the *Daily Mirror* as saying: "It was unusual for the star to have been so bright. It rises due east about 8.30 in the evening (summer time)."

And in St. Matthew's Gospel we read: "We have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him." And though this expression might be held merely to indicate the direction of the country from which they had come, it is more probable, seeing that the phrase is again repeated, "the star, which they saw in the east," that it is intended to indicate the direction of its rising.

Of course, all stars appear to rise from the east, but the great majority of stars rise either north or south of the celestial equator. The fact that this star rose *due east* emphasises the similarity of the two stars.

(3) But further still, as the star rose, the

sun at the other side of the earth veiled its light ! In other words, that very night there was a total eclipse of the sun, the only total eclipse of the sun in the year 1918 ! There does not appear to be any other record of the coincidence of a total eclipse of the sun occurring on the very night of the appearance of a brilliant new star of the first magnitude, and as of course, astronomically, there is no connection between an eclipse and a new star, the fact of these two striking events coinciding may well have been intended by God to draw our particular attention to this new star.

May we not see in this, too, a parable of what will happen when “ the Bright and Morning Star ” shall at last shine forth ! Then there shall be no need of “ candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

(4) Exactly forty days elapsed between the appearance of the star on June 8th, 1918. and the victorious advance of General Foch’s armies on July 18th, which ended in victory. Now forty days is ever the Divine period of testing, whether of men or nations. “ And

the flood was forty days upon the earth." " Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." It was indeed a time of testing for us all, when the flood of the German hosts had reached almost to Amiens. Yet one at least of God's faithful servants, Mr. T. M. Westerdale, tells us in his book, *The Coming Miracle*, that he knew from the prophecies in God's Word what the end would be, and wrote in April, 1918: " Despite appearances, German's little day is ebbing fast. The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Of our Lord it is written that He was, at the beginning of His ministry, " forty days tempted of the Devil" ; whilst a period of " forty days" elapsed between His Resurrection and His Ascension, and when this last period of forty days was ended, and our Lord had disappeared from the upward gaze of His disciples, they received that glorious promise, the signs of whose near fulfilment we are now considering: " This same Jesus, Which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." To that promise we

firmly hold, and earnestly hope our eyes may see its fulfilment.

(5) Another rather striking coincidence, if it is nothing more, occurred in connection with this star. It appeared in the constellation Aquila or the Eagle, on Saturday, June 8th, 1918, and on *that very afternoon* there was launched on the Tyne what is described as "one of the largest ships in the British Navy," and the name given her was *H.M.S. Eagle!* The special point about this fact is not alone the similarity of name, and that God's Nova Aquilæ appeared in the sky the very same day that the British Navy's Nova Aquilæ was launched ; but that of all the capital ships that were launched during the war, the name of this one alone was allowed to come to the public knowledge ! Did God over-rule the heart of our gracious King to cause this to be done ? The following is the notice of the launch from *The Times* of Thursday, June 13th, 1918 :

H.M.S. EAGLE.

NAMED BY MRS. PAGE AT THE LAUNCH.

"The United States Naval Headquarters

in London announce that Mrs. Page, wife of the American Ambassador, named H.M.S. *Eagle*, one of the largest ships in the British Navy, at her launch at Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth and Co.'s yard on the Tyne on Saturday. Mrs. Page was invited to be official sponsor for the *Eagle* by Sir Eric Geddes, the First Lord of the Admiralty, with the express approval of the King."

Now the *Eagle* is not a battleship, though the description given of her as "one of the largest ships in the British Navy" might lead one to think so. She is an aircraft carrier, and cost the enormous sum of four millions sterling! Her purpose then is to enable men to be launched up into the air, and fly! And the Star that God caused to blaze out in the constellation of the *Eagle* in the sky, is the herald of that glad Day, when all who are ready will be changed into their glorious heavenly bodies, and without the help of aeroplanes, or earthly eagles, will be enabled, in the words of Isaiah the prophet, to "mount up with wings as eagles," for the glad design of meeting their Lord in the air!

It is surely easy to see God's Hand illuminating this new Star in the east on this identical day, in the constellation of the same name, the Eagle, for the evident intent of warning for instant readiness, all those who like the wise men of old, are anxious to be among the first to lay their trophies at His feet, and to constitute the Air Force of the Heavenly armies by accepting the invitation to fly to the appointed meeting place in the air, to go in to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb !

(6) Finally, we shall presently learn that this Star appeared just before the commencement of the last hour of Gentile supremacy over the earth ! And it is another corroboration of our belief that the star was one of the promised "signs," when we remember that, as *The Times* correspondent remarked in the passage previously quoted, there appeared another exceptionally brilliant new star in the heavens in the year 1572, which "in December, 1573, shone like Jupiter."

Now we have seen that a time or day of Gentile sovereignty is 360 years in duration, and if we count backward for 360 years from

the year 1934, which we have seen to be the year apparently indicated to bound the expiry of the Times of the Gentiles, we find that we come to the year 1573 !

In other words, just as this recent new star seems to have come just before the start of the last Gentile *hour*, so just before the beginning of the last Gentile *day* or time, the most brilliant new star ever known, foretold its shining message in the sky !

It is significant, too, that this former messenger, which heralded the beginning of the last long Gentile day, shone in the heavens for over a year, whilst this latest starry messenger which heralds the last short hour only, shone out in its greatest splendour merely for about a fortnight, and a fortnight is the twenty-fourth part of a year, as an hour is the twenty-fourth part of a day !

Such were the remarkable circumstances that accompanied the blazing-out in the starlit heavens for one brief fortnight of this silent messenger. What did it portend ? Doubtless there are some who would put all down to the long arm of coincidence, but to the thoughtful students of God's Word, who

have watched the unerring fulfilment of so many of the prophecies of the Bible, there will surely come the consciousness that yet another of the promised indications of the end of the Times of the Gentiles has come to pass ; and with faces set towards the dawn, they will, with “loins girded” and “lamps burning,” wait calmly through the midnight hour for the coming of their King !

For if the year 1934 be really indicated as the closing year of the Times of the Gentiles, then the Rapture of the Church of Christ, which is the recall of God’s ambassadors on earth, to meet the Lord in the air, must be *very imminent*, and may take place at any moment now. It appears to be the next event on God’s programme. Those who love the Lord have no other event to watch for, but must hold themselves in instant readiness for that glad Translation, when “in the twinkling of an eye,” His ~~saints~~ will be “changed,” and in their glorified Resurrection bodies rise to meet their beloved Redeemer and Lord to go in with Him to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. There will be no time to get ready when the signal is given, for the

Rapture is instantaneous. Instant readiness for the call that came to Enoch and Elijah is an absolute necessity for all who wish to share in the joy of that glad moment.

“ In the year of the jubilee the field shall return unto Him of Whom it was bought, even to Him to Whom the possession of the land did belong ” (Leviticus xxvii. 24).

“ And He shall send Jesus Christ Which before was preached unto you : Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began ” (Acts iii 20, 21).

CHAPTER VII.

THE JUBILEE.

OF all the fascinating records God has given us in the Old Testament of events and of statutes, which we are expressly told were intended to be types or picture emblems “written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come,” none perhaps has received less attention than the institution of the Jubilee for the Jewish people. It is true we have annexed the word, and applied it to mean a period of fifty years, but its significance has rarely been looked into.

The poor slaves in the Southern States of North America used indeed to sing :

“ For de ransom will be paid,
And free men de darkies made,
In de year of Jubilee ” ;

whilst later the Fisk Jubilee Singers made us familiar with the fourth verse of “ John Brown’s Body lies a’mouldering in the Grave ” as :

“ Now has come the glorious Jubilee,
Now has come the glorious Jubilee,
Now has come the glorious Jubilee,
When all mankind are free ” ;

and also with—

“ Oh, brothers, are you getting ready, ready,
Brothers, are you getting ready, ready,
For the year of Jubilee ?
Oh, rise, shine, and give God the glory,
For the year of Jubilee.”

But for the most part, the teaching of the wonderful year of Jubilee has been ignored, and yet it would not have been instituted except for some special purpose, and to teach some particular lesson.

When we come to study it, we find that the institution of the Jubilee was to be coincident with the entry of the children of Israel into the Land. It was commanded by God whilst they were at Mount Sinai, but was not to come into force till “ ye come into the Land which I give you.” It is clear, then, from the outset that it was to be closely connected with the possession by the Jews of the Holy Land. Consequently, it may give us a

clue to our enquiry as to the ending of the Times of the Gentiles and the re-entry of the Jews to their promised inheritance, if we can ascertain whether any Jubilee year is approaching at the present time, and if so, what year will it be ?

But first let us consider its character. It is minutely described in Leviticus xxv., and from that chapter we learn that it was to be a year of release, in which land purchased, was to return free to the possession of the seller. Houses in walled cities were exempt from this provision, but all land and houses in unwalled villages were all to return to the original holder free of any price. Similarly, anyone that had sold himself because of his poverty, must regain his freedom without price when the year of Jubilee came round. In addition we find that no sowing nor reaping was to be carried on in that year.

The next curious thing we notice about the Jubilee is that there is no record of its ever having been kept ! But we soon find the reason for this ; for, besides the Jubilee year, the Jews had been also commanded to keep each seventh year as a Sabbath year, or year

of release, and neither to sow nor reap in the seventh year. We find, however, that they ignored this Sabbath year ordinance, and sowed and reaped on the seventh year just like any other year. So that, failing to keep this seventh year, they naturally failed to keep the greater year, the “seven times seven years” year, but appear to have ignored it throughout their entire history in the Land.

When, however, we turn to the sixth chapter of Joshua, we find the word “jubilee” occurring no less than five times! It is, unfortunately, translated “ram’s horns” in our A.V., but the word so rendered is simply the word “*yobel*,” which is elsewhere always translated “jubilee”; (except in Exodus xix. 13, where it is translated “trumpet”). This latter passage—“When the jubilee soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount”—occurs when the Jews are at Sinai, where the Jubilee year was first commanded to be kept when they entered the Land, which however they did not do for nearly forty years afterwards.

The fact therefore, that the instant they enter the Land and commence the wonderful

march round Jericho, they are commanded to sound “seven trumpets of Jubilee,” is significant; and seems clearly to show that this year of entry into the Promised Land is to be regarded as a year of Jubilee. They neither sowed nor reaped that year, “they did eat of the old corn of the land,” and “the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land: neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the Land of Canaan that year.”

The mention of the Jubilee trumpet occurs five times throughout this wonderful chapter, and when we come to examine it more closely, we can see that the whole account of this marvellous fall of Jericho seems to contain within itself a complete picture of the time of the end. So that the first event in the history of the Jewish nation in the Land becomes a prophetic picture of the events to happen at the time of the end, when the sovereignty of the Gentile nations gives way to the righteous rule of the Messiah, the Coming King, Who is to set up His kingdom of peace for the long earthly Sabbath Day of 1,000 years!

First, in the previous chapter we have the wonderful appearance of the Heavenly Visitant, Who comes neither "for us or for our adversaries," neither for or against any special people, "but as captain (or prince) of the host of the Lord am I now come." So the Lord Jesus Christ is coming to rule all nations, and He comes (as we learn in Deuteronomy and Zechariah and Revelation) with the armies of His saints.

Next we find the children of Israel commanded to March once a day for six days round the doomed city, typical, surely, of the six thousand-year days of earth's present history, during which the Gentile nations have ruled the world, though their sovereignty *over the Land itself* has been for only a portion of this six-day period, viz., for the space of time known as the Times of the Gentiles. Then we see that, as the seventh day (verse 15) dawns, they are commanded to march round the city "seven times."

"And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner sev[n] times; only on that day

they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city. And the city shall be accursed (literally, devoted) even it, and all that are therein, to the Lord; only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent."

May we not see here the dawn of the great seventh day, the Millennial Day, and it occurs when the host marches "seven times" round the city, as if to signify the end of the Seven Times of the Gentiles.

Then in verse 5 we read: "And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, (lit.) "*the Horn of Jubilee.*" This is the only place in the chapter where the word "horn" occurs in the Hebrew, and the word is in the singular; whilst the "trumpets of ram's horns," i.e., "trumpets of Jubilee," are in the plural: thus showing that, in this passage, where the Trumpet of Jubilee is being sounded at the seventh time of going round the city, the

power of the Messiah Himself is to be manifested. In Hannah's song (1. Samuel ii. 10) we have the *first* mention of the Messiah in the Bible, and it reads: "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall He thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and He shall give strength unto His King, and exalt the *Horn of His Messiah*."

Then we have in verse 16, "And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets," that is, the priests have sounded the trumpets on this day six times, and at the seventh sounding the city is taken. So in Revelation x. 7, "In the days of the voice of the *seventh* angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets." And again in Rev. xi. 15, "And the *seventh angel sounded*; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, (R.V.) *The kingdom of the WORLD is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ*; and He shall reign for ever and ever, And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their

faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Which art, and wast, and art to come ; *because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned.* And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great ; *and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.*"

Then Rahab and her household, who are protected by the "line of scarlet thread," type of the precious Blood of Christ, are brought out in safety, before the city is destroyed. So will all those who put their faith in the Lamb of God be protected from "the wrath of the Lamb."

Finally we notice that "the ark of God" is carried round the city. It contains the Law, God's Holy Word. The people are told not to speak : "Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout ; then shall ye shout."

God's Holy Word is to carry its message to those who do not believe. God's Word alone is our message to the world. "The Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

So the Lord Himself said: "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last Day."

Now, then, we have seen that the Year of Jubilee seems to point forward to that great year when the long-looked-for Messiah will come to reign over the earth! If that be so, it is worth trying to see if there is any Jubilee Year occurring in the near future, and if in any way it synchronizes with the possible end of the Times of the Gentiles.

We have seen that the year of entry into the Land seems clearly marked in God's Word as the first Jubilee Year. Therefore we must start with that year. Now if we put on one side all human chronologies, and

with childlike hearts believe, since we have found the Bible to foretell accurately so many historical events, that its chronology is also correct, and that any so-called difficulties are simply caused by our lack of knowledge, and not by any inaccuracy in the inspired Word, we find that it is perfectly easy to make up a calendar of years without any great mathematical knowledge being required. We start with Adam and find that he had a son, Seth, when 130 years of age ; we begin, then, with 130 years, and ignoring the rest of Adam's life we pass to Seth, who we find had a son at 105 years of age ; we add this to 130 and go on to Enos, who had a son at 90 years of age. Thus we get the years consecutively recorded, and proceeding onwards, we find that at Terah's death, 2,083 years had elapsed from Adam's creation. Abraham than at his father's death had the promise of the Land renewed to him, and set out for the Holy Land, where he lived till his own death.

Now in Exodus xii. 41 we read : " And it came to pass at the end of the 430 years, even the self-same day, it came to pass, that

all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." If we enquire when the 430 years started, we find in Gal. iii. 17 these words: "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." This shows us that the 430 years started from the Abrahamic covenant confirmed to Abraham at Terah's death. So we add 430 years to the 2,083 elapsed since Adam's creation, and get 2,513 as the total years from Adam to the Exodus from Egypt. If, then, we add the forty years spent in the wilderness, the total is 2,553 years from Adam to the entry into the Land.

Now God's Word clearly indicates, as we show in the last chapter of this book, that the present history of the world is one of a week of days, of which each day is 1,000 years, and it also shows that four of these days had elapsed at the First Coming of Christ. If, then, we subtract our total of 2,553 years from 4,000 we find that the year in which the children of Israel entered the Land was B.C.

1447. This year, then, B.C. 1447, is the year from which we must count our Jubilee periods ; it was the *first* Jubilee year, the year in which the walls of Jericho fell, and typical world sovereignty was overthrown.

Before, however, we can count forward from this year, we must ascertain clearly the exact length of a Jubilee period. Some have taken it as forty-nine years, and others as fifty years, but God's Word leaves us in no uncertainty on the point. In Lev. xxv. 8-10, we read : "And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years : and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the Jubilee (lit., the shouting) to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month ; in the Day of Atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the Land unto all the inhabitants thereof : it shall be a Jubilee unto you ; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family."

We see from this that the Jubilee period was one of forty-nine years, and in the middle of a year, evidently of the 49th year, on the tenth day of the seventh month, the trumpet was to sound, so that the fiftieth year was a year composed of the last half of the 49th year and the first half of the first year of the next Jubilee period ; thus linking the two periods together. Thus when we count forward it must be by periods of forty-nine years and not periods of fifty years. Otherwise the Sabbath year would have never corresponded with the Jubilee year ! The Sabbath years were each seventh year, and by keeping the Jubilee year as a separate fiftieth year, and not as a linked year, the sequence of sevens or weeks of years, emphasised so clearly in the verse quoted above, would have been entirely upset.

Now from B.C. 1447 the first Jubilee year, to A.D. 1926 is 3,373 years, and if we divide that number by the number of years in a Jubilee period, i.e., by 49, we find that 68 Jubilee periods have elapsed since B.C. 1447 ; the last Jubilee year was therefore the year A.D. 1885, and 41 years of the 69th period

have since gone by. Another eight years are required to make up 49 years, and this period of 8 years will bring us to the year A.D. 1934. Now this is the very year which we have already seen indicated as being apparently the final year of the Times of the Gentiles !

As the first year B.C. 1447 is indicated to be the *first* Jubilee year by the blowing of the Jubilee trumpets at the taking of Jericho, and the fact that they neither sowed nor reaped that year, but "did eat of the old corn of the Land," it is manifest that when the 69th Jubilee period expires in A.D. 1934, that year will usher in the Seventieth Jubilee Year.

Now when the Jews were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar, we read in II. Chron. xxxvi. 19, 20, 21: "And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and his sons, until the reign of the kingdom of Persia :

to fulfil the Word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, *until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.*" Thus the short captivity of the Jews was one of seventy years, and we are expressly told that during this period the land was to get the opportunity of enjoying her "*sabbath*" years.

When the long period from the entry into the Land to the end of the Times of the Gentiles expires, the tale of seventy Jubilee Years or Sabbaths of Sabbaths of years will have been finally completed. And according to the Word of God, as we have seen, this long period will apparently expire at exactly the same time as the Times of the Gentiles ! Then the great seventieth year of release, the year for proclaiming liberty "*throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof*" will be upon us. What will it bring ? Well may our hearts thrill with expectation for what this wonderful year may have in store !

In Lev. xxvi., where four times over God said that if the children of Israel disobeyed Him, He would chastise them "*seven times*"

for their sins. He also added again that whilst they were scattered away from their land, "Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it." We should thus expect that the Seven Times of punishment would involve a long period of 69 Jubilee periods, whose expiry would end the long sabbath-keeping of the Land and usher in to a restored nation a glorious Seventieth Jubilee period of liberty and rest.

This 26th chapter of Leviticus just quoted, which has a four-fold mention of the Seven Times, is preceded by the 25th chapter, which is devoted to the institution of the very Jubilee Year that we have been considering! And it is followed by the 27th chapter, which also reverts again to the subject of the Jubilee Year! The only two chapters in Leviticus in which it is mentioned! The 25th chapter has the Hebrew word "*yobel*," or Jubilee, no less than fourteen times, whilst the 27th

chapter has it six times, or twenty times in all, out of the twenty-seven occurrences of the word in the original Hebrew. And in between these two chapters comes the four-fold mention of the great Seven Times! Of the remaining seven places where the word occurs, five are in that wonderful chapter of Joshua vi., where the Jubilee trumpet sounds in the Land for the first time.

Seeing how wonderfully God's Word has now revealed to us that the year 1934 will be the Seventieth Jubilee Year, and will apparently also see the close of the great Seven Times of Gentile rule, we might here mention another significant fact.

Many of our readers, particularly those who have read "Spiritual Arithmetic,"* will know that there is a number hidden behind each word of the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, and that in very many instances these numbers are intensely significant, and often prove the key to unlock the meaning of God's holy Word. They will, therefore, be undoubtedly struck with the fact that the

* "Spiritual Arithmetic," by Reginald T. Naish. (Publishers, C. J. Thynne & Jarvis Ltd., 28, Whitefriars Street, E.C. 4.) 2s. 6d.

Name, *Huios tou Theou*, or "Son of God," has as its number or numerical value, 1934 !

The late Bishop Moule translated Romans viii. 19, "For the earnest longing of creation is awaiting the Unveiling of the Son of God." May God in His wisdom have hidden the year of that glorious Unveiling behind the very Name of Him Who is to be unveiled ?

It is interesting to notice, ere we close this subject, that from the establishment and dedication of Solomon's Temple in B.C. 1000 to the rebuilding and dedication of the Second Temple under Zerubbabel in B.C. 517, a period of 483 years elapsed ; whilst the period from B.C. 1447, the year of entry into the Land, and the First Jubilee Year, to A.D. 1934, the Seventieth Jubilee Year, is exactly 3,381 years, or *seven times 483 years* !

We are now in a position to consider the last hour of the Times of the Gentiles, the Final Hour of Gentile sovereignty !

“ If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee ” (Rev. iii. 3).

“ And none of the wicked shall understand ; but the wise shall understand ” (Daniel xii. 10).

“ And another angel came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Send forth Thy sickle, and reap : for the hour to reap is come ; for the harvest of the earth is over-ripe ” (Rev. xiv. 15, R.V.).

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FINAL HOUR.

IN considering this Final Hour of Gentile sovereignty, it may perhaps be well to make it clear at the outset that we do *not* mean that the final Day of Judgment is at hand, the judgment of the Great White Throne, spoken of in Revelation xx. 11. That judgment, when all the unbelieving dead are resurrected to receive the just sentence for their rejection of the Saviour, is still far in the distance. That same chapter of Revelation clearly states that there will first be a resurrection of believers, and that these will live and reign with Christ for 1,000 years, before any of the unsaved dead arise at the “resurrection of damnation” or judgment.

When the Last Judgment takes place “the earth and the heavens” will have “fled away,” and the days of eternity will have been ushered in. Before that happens, this poor troubled earth has to enjoy that Millennial Sabbath, whose wonderful days of peace and happiness under the rule of the Lord

Jesus Christ are the great theme of a large part of the Word of God.

That glorious day of 1,000 years' duration is the Seventh Day, the Sabbath Day of earth's present history. And what we are now considering is the final ending of the sixth 1,000 year Day, the closing period on Saturday night—the Midnight Hour—in the course of which our Lord clearly warned His redeemed children to expect and watch for the Midnight Cry: “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh.” His Coming will usher in that glorious Sabbath Day of which each recurring Sabbath down all the centuries has been the silent witness and glad foretaste.

The character of that hour is clearly outlined in Scripture. It is to be an hour of terrible world troubles, and great upheavals of the existing order of things. “Distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.” A time of great anxiety to all whose hearts are set on this world's goods. “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that

shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered ; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days." "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God ; having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

The great increase in juvenile crime, the inability of trade union leaders to control their members, the inordinate craze for pleasure at all costs, the rapid increase of theatres and cinemas, and other institutions which are devoted to pleasure-giving, all show that the foregoing prophecy is being fulfilled before our eyes. Whilst the pretence of religiousness without any real love of God is widespread, and is accompanied

by an enormous increase of superstition, shown by the wearing of mascots or little idols, and the scrupulous adherence to practices such as "touching wood," avoiding a ladder, etc., all of which are redolent of idolatry.

Again the Word of God warns us: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." And the widespread growth of Spiritualism or Demonism, and of Christian Science, and Millennial Dawnism, and other departures from the Word of God, give witness to this also coming to pass before our eyes.

Finally we are told by the Holy Spirit in the last words of St. Paul that, so far from the end of the present age showing any improvement, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." The picture is not a pleasant one, but who that reads the news of the day can say that it has been drawn in too black colours? The papers of this halcyon time of peace tell us one terrible story of unrest,

crime, Bolshevism, an appalling increase in divorce, with a desire for it to be made easier still, and a wild rush for pleasure and for money, exceeding anything ever known.

These are the undoubted characteristics of the present day, and they show us only too clearly that with the spread of civilisation, wickedness is increasing, and man's evil heart, where untouched by the grace of God, is only using education and civilisation to refine his wickedness, and to further more rapidly his own evil desires.

So much for the characteristics of the end of the age, and the beginning of the last hour of Gentile sovereignty over the earth.

But to those who have put their trust in the only Saviour for helpless sinners, and whose sins are washed away in the precious Blood of Christ, there is a glad message of comfort given. In Luke xxi. we read : " And when these things BEGIN to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads ; for your redemption (lit., your loosing-away) draweth nigh." So also in Rev. x. 7 : " But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall BEGIN to sound, the mystery

of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets." This evidently refers to the Rapture of the Church of Christ.

This glorious Rapture, by which those who are "alive and remain unto the Coming of the Lord" gain the inestimable privilege of escaping death by a wonderful instantaneous translation, is the lode-star of the Church. It is called "that Blessed Hope" (Titus ii. 13), we are urged to watch and wait for it. And the striking of eleven o'clock, heralding the commencement of the Midnight Hour, seems clearly to be God's warning to His watching people, that the seventh angel is about to "begin to sound." We are clearly told "we shall not all sleep" (that is, die), "but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump."

Now the seventh angel is the last angel to sound, hence the warning to get ready, because when he "*begins*" to sound, *before* the actual sounding, the Mystery of God, that is, the calling-out of the Lord's people, would be finished, and the "ready" saints

removed by Rapture from the earth before the awful storm of God's judgments breaks upon it.

So that the believer must clearly bear in mind, when studying this subject of the expiry of the Times of the Gentiles, that *if* the year 1934 be indicated by God's Word as the date for the final ending of the Seven Times of Gentile sovereignty over the Land and the people of the Jews, *then* the hour for the Rapture of the Church of Christ must be *very near*, because it is clearly indicated to take place *before* the Times of the Gentiles actually expire! It may be at any moment now, hence the need for constant watchfulness, and deep heart-preparation for that approaching moment of bliss, when our beloved Lord shall call us unto Himself!

Then later in Rev. xi. 15, we have the actual sounding: "And the seventh angel sounded" and then "the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." This actual sounding referring to the return of the Lord Jesus *with* all His saints to the earth to reign. Those

who love Christ and are watching for Him, will only see the BEGINNING of the awful time of trouble ; they will be caught up before it has proceeded far on its dreadful course.

This is the hope for those whose hearts are warm towards the Saviour Whom they love and serve, that some time during the Midnight Hour, those who are watching, will hear the Saviour's Voice calling them to gather up to meet Him in the air, to be with Him for a short while, and then in their glorified resurrection bodies to return with Him, when He comes "with power and great glory" to arrest the destructive course of the Battle of Armageddon in the Holy Land ; to succour the believing remnant of His earthly people, the Jews ; to judge the living nations in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, as graphically depicted in Matthew xxv., for their treatment of His brethren, the Jews ; and then to reign over the earth for that long Sabbath Day of 1,000 years. "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth" will then be at last literally true, and those who love Him will reign with Him over the earth throughout that joyous time before eternity's glad days

in a new heaven, and a new earth shall finally commence.

Well may we bear with the world's sneers, and willingly turn our backs upon all that Vanity Fair has to offer us, in view of the transcendent glory of our promised inheritance. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

But now we must see what the Word of God has to say as to the length of this last dread hour, before the Sabbath Morning dawns. The hour is specifically mentioned no less than nine times in the Book of Revelation, and in considering these passages we must remember that this Book deals in symbols, or representations of something else for which they stand.

Now in Matt. xxiv. 36 we read: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only." Here we are to understand a literal day, and

a literal hour, because St. Matthew is not a Book of Symbols. And it is true that we do *not* know the actual day or hour when the Lord Jesus will call His children up to be with Him, preparatory to His glorious Return with them. We never shall know the actual hour or day of that glorious Home-going, and all attempts to ascertain or fix it will always be futile. But in Revelation iii. 3, we are told, "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will arrive over thee." Here we are given distinctly to infer that those who *are* watching for the Lord's Return *will* know the hour in which He is coming. Is there any contradiction? No, none at all; the explanation is simply that whilst in Matthew the day and hour are literal, are of the Lord's Return to the air for His saints, and are hidden; in Revelation the hour is symbolical, and represents a period of years, at some time during the course of which the Lord will come for His watching ones. Those who watch will apparently be enabled to know the "Hour" or period of years, at some time in the course

of which the Lord will come for His redeemed ones, but they will *not* know the actual day or hour when the glad event will take place. This is the first mention of the hour in Revelation, and it is significant.

The second place where it occurs is in the same chapter and the 10th verse. It reads : “ Because thou hast kept the word of My patience I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly : hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” The Greek might be better translated : “ I also will preserve thee out from the hour of trial which is about to come upon the whole habitable world.”

It is clear that this is a promise to those who have kept the word of Christ’s patience. “ Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the Coming of the Lord.” And to such patient watchers the promise is that they will be rescued from out of the hour of trial which is to come upon the whole world. What an incentive to patient watchfulness, unmindful of the mocking of those who cry, “ Where

is the promise of His Coming?" and who thus try to rob us of our crown.

Then in chapter xi. 13 we read: "And the same hour was there a great earthquake." This earthquake occurs just after the rapture to heaven of the "two witnesses," spoken of in this chapter, and appears to indicate a tremendous social and political upheaval to occur at some time in this "hour" following on the removal by rapture of some special body of witnesses.

The next two places where this fateful symbolic hour is spoken of are in chapter xiv. In verses 6 and 7 we read of an angel flying in the midst of heaven, and this angel, "with a loud voice," says: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

The "hour" here is linked with the fall of Babylon; typical, as being the name of the first of the great Gentile empires that

scattered the Jews, of world sovereignty generally. And that the “hour” is that period of time, when, the Times of the Gentiles being fulfilled, world sovereignty will be taken from them, is shown very clearly in chapter xviii., which is devoted to the fall of Babylon the Great, and where this terrible hour is three times mentioned. In verse 10 we read: “Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come”; in verse 17: “For in one hour so great riches is come to nought”; and in verse 19: “For in one hour is she made desolate.” Thus is the completeness of the overthrow of Gentile sovereignty of the earth graphically foretold.

And the Old Testament tells the same story, for in Daniel vii. 11 and 12 is found written concerning the nations, seen by the prophet as beasts—that is, ruling by military force: “I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet

their lives were prolonged for a season and time." That is, the leading apostate nation is destroyed, whilst the others are deprived of sovereignty, though allowed to continue their existence as nations.

The next few verses of this chapter of Daniel speak of the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to rule over the earth ; " And there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him ; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." We might add that this portion of Daniel is written in Chaldee, instead of Hebrew, to make more clear the fact of this chapter relating to the Gentile nations, and not to the Jews only.

Turning back now to Revelation, the second place in chapter xiv. where the hour is spoken of, is in verse 15, where it is translated " the time," but the Greek word is " hour" : and the R.V. reads :—" And another angel came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Send forth Thy sickle and reap :

for the hour to reap is come ; for the harvest of the earth is over-ripe. And He that sat on the cloud cast His sickle upon the earth ; and the earth was reaped." We are told explicitly that the One sitting on the cloud is "like unto the Son of Man," and this is the name that is always applied only to our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament. It first appears when our Lord says that "The Son of Man hath not where to lay His Head." The One perfect Man, Who had the right to the Lordship of the whole earth, had no foot of it that He could use for a resting-place ! It occurs 88 times in all, and this passage in Revelation is the very last, where the Son of Man reaps the harvest of His precious redeemed souls. It is immediately followed by the angel with the "sharp sickle," who reaps the awful harvest of "the vine of the earth" at the dread battle of Armageddon, when, as we learn in Ezekiel xxxix. 12, it takes no less than seven months to bury the slain !

The watchful saints of Christ however are safe with their Coming King, ready to reign with Him over the earth during His glorious Millennial rule.

“ And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever ” (Daniel ii. 44).

“ And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet ; but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast ” (Rev. xvii. 12).

CHAPTER IX.

THE COUNCIL OF TEN.

THE only place in Revelation, where this dread hour is spoken of, that we have not touched on, is in chapter xvii., and we have left this till the last because it brings us right in touch with one of the proofs of this hour having already begun its dreadful course. In verse 12, after speaking of the various forms of government that should bear rule over the remains of the old Roman Empire, it speaks of “ten horns,” and the explanation is given: “And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast.”

Now, long ago, Dr. Grattan Guinness and others pointed out that the number of kingdoms into which the old Roman Empire had split up had averaged ten kingdoms for many years, but it was clearly evident from a comparison of this passage with Daniel ii., where the great image, typical of the course of Gentile sovereignty, ends with actual toes of

iron and miry clay, that at the time of the end, an exact number of ten rulers would probably appear.

So it was with no feeling of surprise that we saw the formation in Paris, the day after the Armistice was signed, of the Council of Ten, often now called the Supreme Council, consisting of five representatives of the five Great Powers, and five representatives chosen out from the smaller Powers. This Council now rules the world, and sends forth from Paris and elsewhere its decrees, which affect all nations. And when we remember the past impotence and disagreement of the old Concert of Europe, it is marvellous to see the unanimity prevailing and the quick decisions come to by this new Council of Ten; but it is by God's decree. For in verse 17, of these ten kings we read: "For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, *and to agree*, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

In Daniel we are told that these ten powers are to be of iron and miry clay, indicating a large admixture of a new democratic government to the old kingly mode of rule, and we

are then told that “ in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.” The Word adds : “ The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter ; and the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure.”

At the time of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, the Babylonian Empire alone had come to its zenith of power, but slowly and surely the prophecy has been fulfilled down the ages, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian and the Roman Empires all rising and falling as foretold. About the time of the French Revolution we appear to have reached the feet of the image, the clay of democratic government then making its appearance for the first time. The past hundred years has seen the clay becoming more and more prominent as we progressed along the feet, and now we have apparently reached the final phase, the ten toes, and as the proportions of the different parts of the image appear to

have fairly approximately corresponded to the duration of the various governments, we can pretty closely gauge the probable length of the last phase of Gentile government of the earth.

There is, however, another way in which we can obtain a guide as to the length of the "hour" during which the "ten horns" are to be permitted to rule the world. We have seen that the length of Gentile supremacy over Jerusalem and the Jews, was to be measured by a period of Seven Times or Days, of which each time or day was to consist of 360 years. Now, if 360 years is the length of a prophetic Gentile day, a prophetic hour would surely be the twenty-fourth part of that period. If, therefore, we divide 360 by 24, we may perhaps arrive at the pre-destined length of this symbolic hour. The result is 15 years.

And if we now assume that the extraordinary coincidences of the six-fold elevens which marked the signing of the Armistice, and the cessation of fighting in this Great War, were divinely ordained to indicate the commencement of this final hour of Gentile rule, and count forward for 15 years from

November 11th, 1918, we arrive at November 11th, 1933, or within a few weeks of the commencement of that year 1934, already wonderfully indicated as marking the expiry of the last Day of the Times of the Gentiles, and as a great year of crisis in so many different ways ! Our studies therefore have brought us to the conclusion, that the last Hour and the last Day, of the Times of the Gentiles expire together, which is what we should naturally expect. Thus wonderfully confirming the lines we have been following up in the Word of God ! When, too, we remember that the year really begins, not in January, which is purely a Roman and comparatively modern idea, but at the September Equinox, from which date the Jews, many centuries before the Roman Empire, have always kept the beginning of their civil year, we see that this fifteen year period carries us forward right to the beginning of this great and epoch-making year !

What it may have in store, it is not for any frail mortal to say. We have, however, seen enough to enable us, without indulging in idle and useless speculations, to set our faces

towards the dawn that is slowly but surely drawing near for those whose hearts are safely resting on the Rock of Ages, and who know that the very same Saviour Who died to save them from their sins, is one day coming again to call His waiting children up to meet Him in the air, and then to return with them, in their glorified resurrection bodies, to reign for one thousand years in power and great glory over this now sorely-troubled earth, before a new heaven and a new earth usher in the glad days of Eternity, when God shall be “all in all.”

Before we close this chapter, it may be interesting to notice how this figure of fifteen as a measurement of judgment combined with mercy, runs in many forms both of height, length, and space of years, throughout the Word of God; sometimes, too, in connection with the figure ten, as illustrative of the form of government at the time of the end. In the account of the earliest judgment of God upon the wickedness of mankind, we read in Genesis vii. 20, of the waters of the Flood, that “fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.”

And we remember that our Lord, speaking of His Return to this earth, said, "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." And it may be that there is a reference here not only to the universal callous indifference to the impending judgments, but also to the measure of the calamity.

In the Tabernacle the wide "gate" of entrance to the court, typical of the long day of grace and the wideness of the blessed "Whosoever will," is flanked on either side by hangings of fifteen cubits. "The hangings of one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits. . . . And on the other side shall be hangings fifteen cubits."

When the hosts of Sennacherib have been destroyed by the angel of the Lord outside the walls of Jerusalem, type of the yet future battle of Armageddon, then Hezekiah, the representative of the Jewish nation, is sick unto death; but in response to his believing prayer, he is granted a further lease of life of fifteen years, and the sign of the fulfilment of God's promise is the returning backward of the shadow ten degrees!

In St. John's Gospel we have the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The miracles in this Gospel are, in the original Greek, specially called "signs," and here we are given the "sign" of the raising of the spiritually dead Jewish nation to life. It occurs after the Lord Jesus has stayed two days where He was, and when He arrives at Bethany, Lazarus has been four days in the grave. Six days in all, so that it is on the seventh day, type of the Millennial Sabbath, that Lazarus' resurrection takes place. Then, in the middle of the account, apparently for no special reason, we are suddenly told, "Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem about fifteen furlongs off."

Jerusalem we have already seen delivered from the down-treading heel of the Turk, but Bethany is to be the place where "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives," as we are told in that graphic description of Zechariah xiv., where the Lord comes in glory to raise the dead Jewish nation to life. May not the distance-space that separates Bethany from Jerusalem have been

specially inserted here, in order to give an indication in the type-picture, of the time-space that would separate Jerusalem's release from the future Bethany scene?

That this great scene was in the Saviour's thoughts at the time is shown by His words to Martha, which, rendered more literally than in our A.V., read: "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he may have died, yet shall he live again (i.e., in resurrection life), and he that is alive (i.e., at Christ's Coming) and is believing in Me, shall never die." Referring to the fact that for those who believe in Christ, and who are alive on the earth at Christ's Second Coming, there will be no death at all, but only a sudden glad change! "We which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them (i.e., the saved dead) in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." The Martha, Mary, and Lazarus of the end of the age, who are trusting in Christ, will go up hand in hand joyfully to meet their Lord, instead of some weeping ones being left behind. It was thus the Lord tried to comfort Martha's sore heart, and so in this

Midnight Hour we are exhorted, “ Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

It is significant that the other place where the distance separating the two places, Bethany and Jerusalem, is mentioned, is immediately after our Lord’s ascension to heaven. And the measurement is given in a different way, being described thus: “ Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath Day’s journey.” The previous words are those of the two white-robed messengers who speak of the Lord Jesus coming again, and when He comes we know that it is to the Mount of Olives. So here the allusion is evidently to the fact that “ a Sabbath Day’s journey” of 1,000 years will elapse between our coming back with the Saviour to the Mount of Olives, and our returning to the New Jerusalem at the end of Christ’s millennial reign, when the earth and heaven will be burnt up, and a new heaven and a new earth receive us for the days of Eternity.

Then in Acts xxvii. we have the longest chapter in that Book devoted to a thrilling

account of a shipwreck. Why? St. Paul suffered many wonderful trials, being three times shipwrecked, and we know that for "a night and a day" he was in the sea on one occasion, but we are given no particulars of most of these extraordinary experiences, whilst this shipwreck is recorded at full length, with minute details.

The reason appears to be that this shipwreck is a graphic type-picture of the history of the Jewish nation at the time of the end, when the Acts of the Apostolic Church are nearly ended. The ship is caught in a terrific storm, type of a world-war, and is driven up and down "in Adria," just as were the Jews driven up and down during the war, fighting on both sides in almost every army; it eventually approaches an island called Melita. "About midnight" they sound, and find it twenty fathoms; they sound again, and find it *fifteen fathoms*; and then they throw four anchors out of the stern, and wish for the day.

Just so are the Zionists throwing earthly anchors out by establishing a Jewish State in Palestine, though still in unbelief

and unconscious of their crucified Messiah. When day comes, the *fifteenth* day of the storm, they find a place where "two seas" meet, and run the ship aground, when the forepart sticks fast and the hinder part is broken. And turning again to Zechariah xiv. we find, just as the millennial day is about to break, the two opposing hosts or "seas" that have gathered round Jerusalem, the northern nations bent on its destruction, the southern nations, led by "the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof," trying vainly to oppose them. Then we learn that "half of the city shall go forth into captivity," just as half of the ship was "broken with the violence of the waves," but "the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city," so the forepart of the ship sticks fast, and eventually all those on board get safe to land. So—when Christ comes and miraculously intervenes to save the believing remnant of His earthly people, the Jews, who cry unto Him to save them—will all those Jews who have put their trust in a crucified Messiah be brought safely through.

Before we leave this figure "fifteen," it may interest us to notice that the Germans, in their retreat through Belgium, declared that they were coming back in fifteen years' time! The *Times* says: "They are even said to be preaching to the inhabitants the doctrine that they are coming back in fifteen years."

The Treaty of Versailles, too, provides for a period of *fifteen years* before certain stipulations come into force! Can it be that this has been ordained of God in accordance with the words in Revelation xvii. about the "ten kings"? "For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will . . . until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

Turning now to the Old Testament again, we find that in almost every place where there is a hidden picture of the time of the end, the figure ten comes in as a symbol of the kind of government that will then be on earth; the ten toes of the Image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and the "ten kings" of Revelation xvii. 12.

In Judges vi. and vii. we have a vivid type of the end time and the battle of Armageddon;

but here we can only stop to notice that it is “ten men of his servants” that Gideon takes to cut down the altar of Baal, type of apostate worship, just as in Revelation xvii. the “ten kings” are said to “hate the whore (apostate Christianity) and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.”

Again, in Ruth, when Boaz, the lord of the harvest, is about to take his Gentile bride, he “took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down”; showing the ten-kingdom form of government that would be in existence just before the calling of the Bride to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

Then the Book of Esther seems to conceal yet another type-picture of the end-time. The aspect here shown is that of the Jewish nation in deadly peril, as it will be at the battle of Armageddon, and Esther, or the Hidden one (from *sathar*, to hide) makes supplication for them, you will find the Jews referred to as “Thy hidden ones” in Psalm lxxxiii. 3, 4, where the crafty design of the nations to destroy the Jews is prophetically

spoken of. Mordecai, "the man whom the king delighteth to honour," type of the Lord Jesus Christ, is given full power and authority to extricate them from their awful peril. Their enemies are instead destroyed. And then we have introduced the "ten sons of Haman," who are slain, just as the "ten kings" are to have their dominion taken away at the Coming of Christ in glory. These ten names are curiously printed in the Hebrew ; they are written perpendicularly, one under another, evidently to draw attention to them, and each name is prefixed by a word that might perhaps be translated "self." The rule of democracy, however much it may be lauded as superior to older forms of government, has the same deadly love of self, and no one is prouder than a democrat, or more intolerant of others. As witness at the present time the constant strikes and threats of "direct action," causing untold misery to the tens of thousands of helpless sufferers, and bringing poverty and desolation in their cruel train.

Thus does the Bible tell the same story throughout, of the form of government that should prevail upon the earth just before the

final termination of Gentile rule, and thus is our faith strengthened to know that as the period of the midnight "hour" draws darker, so surely does the literal but unknown hour of our release grow nearer! "For yet a little while, how little, how little, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. x. 37, lit.). "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His Coming is as certain as the dawn" (Hosea vi. 3, lit.). Let us then "follow on to *know* the Lord," so that when the glad day dawns, we may not be of those who, though "virgins," were yet "foolish," and to whom the Lord had to utter those sad words: "Verily I say unto you, I *know* you not." Let us "be filled with the Spirit," and keep ourselves separated unto Him, that we may not miss that "crown of righteousness," which, says St. Paul, "the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but *also to all them that have loved His Appearing*" (II. Tim. iv. 8, R.V.).

And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven, about the space of half an hour" (Rev. viii. 1).

"There was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building" (I. Kings vi. 7).

CHAPTER X.

THE LAST HALF-HOUR.

WE have now traced the nature, length, and characteristics of the final “Hour” of Gentile sovereignty over the Land and People of the Jews, but there is some further information given us regarding the events of the last portion of this “Hour,” and to complete our study of this subject, so all-engrossing to present-day dwellers on earth, let us now proceed to see what the Word of God has to say concerning the last half of this “Hour.”

In Revelation viii. 1, we read: “And when He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in Heaven about the space of half an hour.” Now, as, in dealing with the “hour,” we saw that it was symbolic of a chronological period and was not to be taken literally, as an actual hour. So, we may be reasonably certain at the outset, that this “half an hour” is not to be measured on the clock, but on the calendar. It is a period

of time during which there is “silence in heaven.”

The Greek word “*hemiorion*,” translated, “the space of half an hour,” occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. This is the only place where we find it, so that we have no other passages to turn to, to help us to elucidate it. As, however, in our study of the “hour” so often mentioned in this last book of the Bible, we have been led to surmise that the period indicated by this symbolic “hour” is fifteen years, it may be that this special phrase, “the space of half an hour,” may refer to a half of this period of fifteen years, and that would bring out this “half an hour” to be a period of seven years and six months. Before, however, we would be justified in jumping to this conclusion, seeing that there is no other mention of this special word in the New Testament to guide us, and show whether this belief is warranted, we must search the Old Testament to see if there is any such period of seven years and six months given in the numerous type-pictures of the Time of the End, which would go to support such a conclusion.

Careful study soon reveals that there are two incidents in the Old Testament which are most clearly pictures of the End-Time, and in each incident the particular period of seven years and six months stands out in bold relief. And still more curious is the fact that in each of these incidents the rather mysterious and particular characteristic mentioned of this "half an hour," viz., that there was "silence" during this interval of time is prominently brought out.

The first incident in the Old Testament where a period of seven years and six months is given, occurs during David's life. He has been living in the wilderness and at Ziklag, and in I. Chron. xii. we are told of all those who came to him in this time of his rejection (verse 22), "For at that time, day by day, there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God." Then we are told in II. Samuel ii. 3 that David brought all these men with him to Hebron (Hebron means fellowship). And then we read in II. Samuel ii. 11, and v, 5, that the time that David reigned in Hebron was "seven years and six months." And it

is not till the end of that period that David is acknowledged publicly as king in Jerusalem. This is a beautiful typical picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is now rejected by the world, but there are those who come out to Him, and putting their trust in Him, separate themselves from the world unto Him. In a little while He will take all such to be with Him in the heavenly place of fellowship, and there they will be with Him for a time, before He comes back with them to reign in Jerusalem.

The second incident is in connection with the building of Solomon's Temple, that wonderful building, probably the most magnificent ever raised by the hand of man, and the construction of which was entirely according to the pattern revealed to David by the Holy Spirit, as we read in I. Chronicles xxviii. 11, 12: "Then David gave to Solomon his son . . . the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord."

In this feature, of its construction being revealed to David by the Holy Spirit, is carried out the type for which it stood. The

Church of Christ, consisting of believers who are born again by the operation of the Holy Spirit, is called in II. Cor. vi: 16, “the temple of the living God.”

Now, in I. Kings vi. 38, we are told that Solomon was “seven years in building” this great Temple. But when we compare verse 1 of this chapter with verse 38, we see that the temple was begun in the second month of Solomon’s fourth year, and finished in the eighth month of Solomon’s eleventh year, so that the exact period of building was seven years and six months.

Looking now at the details of its construction, we find in verse 7 that, “the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building.” Thus we see here a period of silence of seven years and six months in Jerusalem, exactly corresponding to the silence in the New Jerusalem “about the space of half an hour” !

Just as Solomon’s Temple was built of stone “made ready before it was brought

thither," so the Church of Christ, "the temple of the living God," is being got ready here, living stones are quarried out of the darkness of sin at conversion, and shaped and moulded by the afflictions and chastisements of this earthly life, in preparation for being put together in the "Jerusalem which is above" in the silence of that half an hour; so dreadful on earth to those left behind, but so joyous, so gloriously blissful for those "who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

Thus we see that both the chief typical pictures given us in the Old Testament, of the mighty men who come out to the anointed king in his rejection, and of the stones made ready and put together in silence in Jerusalem seem to corroborate our surmise that the "half an hour" of silence in heaven might be a period of seven years and six months!

Whether this is so or not, time alone will show; but it offers a possible solution of this very striking passage in Rev. viii. 1, which has seemed extremely difficult of interpretation.

Another very interesting suggestion has been made concerning this passage, which is

worth pausing over. There is now a period of the year when millions of people cease their ordinary work, and stand in silence. Tram-cars and motors stop, the whirl of machinery ceases, every voice is hushed. In city and busy mart, in crowded street, and lonely country village, a deathlike stillness falls on the ear. There is "silence in heaven," no sound is to be heard, a stillness that may be felt. And this takes place once a year, at an exact moment, at eleven o'clock in the morning, on the eleventh day, of the eleventh month of the year! The newspapers refer to it as "the Great Silence"! The period chosen for this silence is *two* minutes on the clock, one wonders why this silence should be limited to exactly two minutes? Why not one minute, or five minutes; what made man select *two* minutes? And the wonder deepens as one realises that it will take 15 years of two minutes "silence" each year to make up "half-an-hour"! The Great Silence started on November 11th, 1919, and there will have elapsed exactly "half-an-hour" of silence on November 11th, 1933! "When He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half

an hour." Is this merely another casual coincidence, or is God speaking to us, and proclaiming that the Day is approaching, that Day so long foretold in the pages of His holy Word?

We lay no stress on chronology, nor do we desire to fix dates, or pry into any matter that God has hidden. But Daniel was expressly told that in the Time of the End, "the wise shall understand." And that surely is a promise that in some inscrutable way God would make clear to His saints what He is about to do.

Whatever view may be taken of the above, it seems to add further evidence to the fact that the Coming of the Lord in the air for His saints is very near, and may occur at any moment!

How needful then the Warning to all God's redeemed people: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

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“ In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away : and the mighty shall be taken away without hand ” (Job xxxiv. 20).

“ And He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon ” (Rev. xvi. 16).

CHAPTER XI.

ARMAGEDDON.

As many people have taken to referring to the recent great war as Armageddon, it may be well to add a few words to show why it is quite certain that the recent war was *not* Armageddon, and that the awful struggle lies still in the future in spite of the Treaty of Versailles and the much-lauded League of Nations.

First, this war of 1914-19 cannot be Armageddon, because it was fought all over the world; there were many different "fronts," and armies fighting widely separated over the earth. Armageddon, on the other hand, is to be fought in Palestine, the nations being gathered together there. "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. . . . And He gathered them together into *a place* called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon" (Rev. xvi. 14 and 16).

Again in Zechariah xiv. 2, 3, 4 : “ For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle. . . . Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east.”

And once more, in that very graphic and detailed account of the great battle in Ezek. xxxviii., we read that the northern nation, described as Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and believed by some to signify Russia, Moscow, and Tobolsk (or North Russia, South Russia, and Siberia), is to come “ against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste : but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them.” This shows that the once desolated land of the Jews will again be inhabited by them, and they will be dwelling safely in it, when the last great fight breaks upon a startled world. The previous words are even more emphatic in saying that this northern nation would “ come into the Land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people.” Now

Palestine in 1914 had not yet become a safely-inhabited Jewish land, so that the recent war cannot possibly be the struggle called Armageddon.

The purpose, too, that brings this great northern nation against Palestine, to break the Peace of Versailles, is thus graphically foretold : " It shall also come to pass that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought : and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages : I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a spoil, and to take a prey ; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the Land."

Thus we can see that the Jews, resettled in Palestine under the protecting hand of Great Britain, will have become in a few years exceedingly prosperous, and the reconstructed Jewish State will be enormously wealthy. It will then excite the cupidity of this northern

nation, which will come up against Palestine with an overwhelming force: “Thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the Land, thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee.” Some other nations, which are particularly described, will then make an endeavour to stop this terrible invasion, and protect the unarmed Jewish people from the destruction threatening them. We read that “Sheba, Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? Hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?”

Sheba and Dedan are probably Arabia; and these names may signify the new Arabian kingdoms recently set up around Palestine. These kingdoms would be vitally interested in the stemming of this northern invasion. The merchants of Tarshish clearly stand for a great trading nation, with large ocean-going ships, for the ships of Tarshish were those large ships of ancient times which were able to go beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, to Tarsessus in Spain, to bring back the wealth

of the mines there. When we learn that this trading or shopkeeping nation has “young lions” belonging to her, we can hardly doubt but that Great Britain and her colonies are intended to be described. So we see that this great final struggle is to take place on the fields of Palestine, between on the one hand a mighty northern nation—“Thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army,” which will invade Palestine, being attracted thereto by reason of the vast wealth accumulated there by the regathered Jewish nation ; and on the other hand a great world-trading and seafearing nation, with all its colonies, including the new Arabian kingdoms.

The result of the contest will hang in the balance. The northern host will penetrate as far as Jerusalem, “and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the woman ravished ; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.” It is just at this crucial moment that heaven opens :

“ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse (symbol of pure government), and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.”

Then follows in this nineteenth chapter of Revelation, the same picture of terrible slaughter that is also given in the thirty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel that we have been studying. The Lord Jesus Christ, the

despised and crucified Saviour, comes in great power and glory with all His saints, to intervene in this awful struggle and save the believing remnant of His earthly people, the Jews; then shall they turn to the One Whom they rejected. “Behold He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him; even so, Amen.” The numbers of slain in that great battle will be so enormous, that “seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the Land. Yea, all the people of the Land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown, the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord.”

The munitions of war also captured in the overwhelming destruction of this northern host will be so great, that the wood of which they are composed will be used for firewood for seven years, so that there will be no necessity for that time to cut down any trees for firewood: “and they shall burn them with fire seven years.”

Then “the Lord shall be King over all

the earth ; in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one." All sovereignty will be in His hands, and the saints are to have the privilege of reigning over the earth with Him for one thousand years. "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." And who are these who shall have this blessed, glorious honour ? "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests : and we shall reign on the earth."

Thus will commence that great, glad Millennial Day, that wondrous Sabbath Day, of which each recurring Sabbath Day is intended to remind us. If we will not obey God here, and will not listen to His voice of love and mercy, we shall lose the privilege of that transcendent Sabbath of which the present Sunday is the type and picture. "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the First Resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of

God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

You, friend, who die without trusting in the Saviour, Who died to save you from your sins, will have no part or lot in that joyous Millennial Day. You will remain in your earthly grave till the thousand years are over, to be then resurrected at the "Resurrection of Damnation" or judgment, to stand before the Great White Throne, when "the earth and the heavens" have "fled away," to have the just sentence of Almighty God executed upon you. The Last Judgment Day is a judgment day of "dead" souls alone. Those who have believed God's Word, and trusted in the precious Blood of Christ, will have been resurrected long before, to share in the glad reign of Christ their Saviour over the earth. Friend, whoever you are, whether Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, let me urge you to flee from the wrath to come ere it be too late, and the awful words of judgment ring in your ears, from which there is no escape. "And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire."

There is a belief among many that when they appear before the Judgment Seat of the Great White Throne, they will have an opportunity of pleading their case. The Word of God shows us clearly that this is not so. The Last Judgment is solely a judgment of execution; your trial, friend, is proceeding here and now, and the Judge is that Word of God you despise. “He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” Our attitude to God’s Word is that which condemns or acquits us. If we believe God’s Word, and repenting of our sins, accept the Saviour as *our* Saviour, we receive the gift of eternal life; if, however, we refuse to believe God’s Word, judgment is already passed on us. “He that believeth not is condemned *already*.” It only remains to execute the sentence already passed, and this will be duly carried out at the Last Judgment. But till death shuts the door, the Hand of Love holds out for your acceptance a free pardon, signed and sealed by the Saviour’s Blood. Be wise in time, listen to

the voice of God's Holy Spirit pleading in your heart, and come to Him Who has said :—" him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

The very facts we have been considering, go to prove to us conclusively that the one sure guide which cannot err is God's Holy Word. Slowly but surely, all the wonderful prophecies are coming literally true, soon all will be fulfilled : " For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, *till all be fulfilled.*

Many mock at the promise of our Lord's Return as the Word foretold they would do, and many who do not desire to mock are yet puzzled at the long delay that seems to have taken place since our Lord uttered the words of the closing chapter of Revelation : " Surely I come quickly." The explanation is, however, a very simple one. The present history of the world is clearly shown throughout Scripture to be one of a week of days, of which each day is the long period of 1,000 years. (Inset within this week is the week of days of Gentile sovereignty over the Land of

Palestine, of which each day is the shorter period of 360 years.) When our Lord came to earth in human form at His First Coming, four of these 1,000 year-days had elapsed. As it were, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday had all gone by. He came on Friday morning, and when He went away again to heaven, on His rejection by His earthly people, He spoke to John in vision, prophetically, saying He would surely return quickly. He was coming back on Saturday at midnight, and speaking thus on Friday morning of His Return on Saturday night, He *was* coming quickly, though to our human eyes, who can hardly conceive that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, *and a thousand years as one day*," it seems as if a long time had elapsed !

But the promise stands true, and now that Friday and Saturday have both passed, and we have arrived at the midnight hour, our hearts must be filled with earnest expectation of the approaching Return of our beloved King. We who know and love Him, must set ourselves apart to watch for Him. This does not mean idleness or dreamy anticipa-

tion. Rather does it mean intense activity ; like the raptured Elijah we must have girded loins, that is, we must put aside everything that hinders, and yield our lives to Him to run as couriers to warn our brothers and sisters of this glad impending Event, and to exhort those who know Him not, to turn and flee to Him for refuge ere it be too late.

“ And at Midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridrgroom cometh ; go ye out to meet Him ” (Matt. xxv. 6).

“ And it shall be said in that Day, Lo, this is our God ; we have waited for Him, and He will save us : this is the Lord ; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation ” (Isaiah xxv. 9).

CHAPTER XII.

THE DARKEST HOUR BEFORE THE DAWN.

WE are now in a position to sum up all the proof that God's Word has given us that the Time of the End, that is, the closing days of the Times of the Gentiles, have been reached, and that we are now actually in the period described by our Lord as "the beginning of birth-throes" in Matt. xxiv. 8. It was thus called by our Lord because it would be a time of most intense trouble on earth, so much so that in Daniel xii. 1, we learn that it would be "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time"; and, because it was to precede immediately the birth or dawn of the brightest and most glorious period of history that the world has yet experienced.

The Lord gave, in Luke xxi., eight distinct signs to His disciples, by which those of them who should be on earth at the time, would have no difficulty in recognising the arrival of this remarkable period.

First, there was to be a world-wide War,

different in characteristics from any previous war. Every nation would be in some way or degree entangled in its meshes, though many would endeavour to adopt an attitude of neutrality. In spite of such efforts, all would suffer from its effects, and their strength would be brought down (Haggai ii. 22). It would be fought by four nations against the rest, and would principally involve those portions of the earth which originally came under the sway of the four great empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. It would commence in the year 1914, being the 2,520th year from the first year of Nebuchadnezzar and would result in the release of the Holy City, which took place on December 9th, 1917. The very day, the 24th day of the ninth month in the Jewish calendar (which that year fell on December 9th) being thrice mentioned in the book of Haggai as the day from which God would begin to bless the Jewish nation.

The Jew-hating or Anti-Semitic nations would suffer worst of all from its effects (Jer. xxx. 16). Such nations were Russia, Roumania, and to a lesser degree, France.

It would be very bloody, and bodies would lie like dung all over the earth. The terrible effects of high explosives in tearing men's bodies to pieces, so that they could not be buried was thus clearly foreshadowed. Its principal weapons of blood, fire, and smoke were expressly stated, though the fact that smoke could possibly become such a deadly weapon both of offence and defence, as it proved to be in its various forms of poisonous gas, smoke screens, etc., would have seemed incredible a few years previously. The war which began in 1914 fulfilled all these, and other particular details given in God's Word.

The *second* sign which our Lord gave was, that there should be "great earthquakes in divers places," and scarcely a month ever passes now without a severe earthquake being chronicled in some part of the world. The greatest ever known, as we have already noticed, occurred in 1920, over a quarter of a million lives being lost. They have now become so frequent that the smaller earthquakes which in years gone by would have received considerable notice, are now often left out of the day's news.

The *third* sign of this time of trouble was to consist of "famines," and it is a sad fact that the greatest famines that the world has ever experienced, in which millions of human beings have died of starvation, have been and are even now devastating large regions of the earth.

The *fourth* sign was to be "pestilences," and we have seen diseases sweep around the earth, carrying off hundreds of thousands of people in their train. The influenza epidemic alone is said to have been the cause of 12,000,000 deaths! Whilst many new diseases of strange character are constantly being chronicled puzzling the medical profession in their efforts to diagnose and cope with them.

The *fifth* sign was foretold in the words "fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven," and again "there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars." We have seen that these strange sights are constantly being noticed in the heavens and on the earth. They have been observed in the sun, the moon and the stars; and also include the intensification of natural

atmospheric phenomena on the earth, often producing terrifying results.

The *sixth* sign concerned the Holy City. The Lord Jesus stated that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." For nearly 1,300 years this ancient city had been under the heel of a cruel foe, and now it has been set free, its ancient inhabitants are welcomed back within its walls, and allowed some voice in its affairs, whilst that ancient language, Hebrew, is heard there on every side. We have seen, too, with regard to this sign, that the day, and the year, of Jerusalem's release were both hidden away in God's Word, and these ancient prophecies were fulfilled to the very letter!

The *seventh* sign given was a very peculiar one, differing entirely from any of the other signs, and yet being of such a character as to be easily recognisable when it occurred. "Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." In plain language, the con-

dition of the earth during the “birth-throes” was to be one of tremendous unrest, and general upheaval of the existing condition of things, which should greatly perplex people, and cause them to be afraid for the stability of existing human institutions. No one who reads the daily newspaper could fail to recognise the above prophecy as being an exact description of the state of the world to-day. Unrest is everywhere. It is confined to no one country or nation, but has infected all. The world is like a seething pot continually boiling over into strikes, revolution, anarchy, and general disturbance, without any very apparent reason for this state of affairs.

The *eighth* sign again concerned the Jewish people. Besides the release from thraldom of their ancient capital city, they themselves would be found returning to their own land, and taking up the status and responsibilities of a recognised nation again, and this was prefigured under the symbol of the “fig-tree” budding or putting forth leaves.

This, the last sign given by our Lord is, as we should perhaps expect, the last to be ful-

filled. The following are the figures given by the Zionist Federation to the League of Nations of the number of Jewish immigrants to Palestine for the past three years :—

1923	7,421
1924	12,856
1925	33,801

Truly the “fig-tree” is, after the lapse of many centuries, at last beginning to bud !

Then the Lord Jesus added that just as the budding of the fig-tree presaged the approach of summer-time, “so likewise ye, when ye see these things coming to pass know ye that the realm of God is nigh at hand.”

That is that the time so long foretold, ordained by God for the setting-up of the glorious Kingdom of the Messiah should have arrived.

Thus we see that the Eight Signs given by the Lord Jesus nearly 1,900 years ago are all coming to pass right before our very eyes. They are of such a differing nature, each from the other, that it is impossible for us to be mistaken as to their meaning when they all occur together and just before the expiry

of the appointed chronological period hidden away in God's Word !

The year A.D. 1934, we have seen :—

(1) Measures to completion the full solar length of the mysterious period of Seven Times, or 2,520 years from the final destruction of Jerusalem, and burning of Solomon's Temple by Nebuchadnezzar in B.C. 587.

(2) Constitutes the 70th year of Jubilee, counting from the first Jubilee year, when the "trumpets of Jubilee" were blown for the very first time in the Holy Land as the Israelites marched around the walls of Jericho.

(3) Is the number, 1934, hidden behind the Greek phrase, "*Uios tou Theou*," which means "Son of God."

(4) Is the year that sees the completion of the 15 year period that seems to constitute the "Hour" so often symbolically spoken of in Daniel and Revelation as the last Hour of Gentile sovereignty over the Land and People of the Jews.

The Hour which is to see the dramatic fall of the nations of the world before the Coming of Him Whose right it is to rule the earth.

That Hour was heralded in the most dramatic manner that could possibly have been devised. The terrific and continuous roar of the artillery, the rattle of the machine-guns, the crack of the sniper's rifle, the bursting of the deadly bombs, and the explosion of the murderous mine, all like hushing to silence as that moment fixed by An Almighty Hand arrived upon the great clock of Time, **ELEVEN O'CLOCK!**

- (1) God marked it by the hours that ceaselessly tick off man's short earthly existence, *the Eleventh Hour!*
- (2) God marked it by the days that fly past so rapidly *the Eleventh Day!*
- (3) God marked it by the months that map out the seasons of the year *the Eleventh Month!*
- (4) God marked it by the date of the overthrow of the Gentile nation, the Turks, who for so many centuries had kept the Holy Land in thrall. For the Turkish Armistice was signed on October 31st, 1918, and the guns ceased everywhere *Eleven days thereafter!*

(5) God marked it by the date of the setting-free of the Holy City Jerusalem, "the City of the Great King," Who is shortly coming. For General Allenby walked in through the Jaffa gate on Tuesday, December 11th, 1917, and the great War ceased on the expiry of exactly *Eleventh months* from that date!

Thus the clock, the calendar, the Holy Land, and the Holy City were all used to mark the beginning of that critical Hour, which seems to bound the present system of earth's government. And scarcely had the dread Hour entered upon its solemn course than the victorious nations of the world, on the following day, November 12th set up the great Council of Ten, always called by that significant name—"the Council of Ten," in all the newspapers for many months, but now known as the Supreme Council, concerning which the Word of God says:—"And the ten horns are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive authority as kings One Hour with the Beast." The Beast signifies anti-christianity, and it is significant to remember

that to say nothing of the others, whose Christianity is mostly nominal, two, France and Japan, are, the one frankly an infidel, and the other an idolatrous heathen nation. Strange partners to try and set up a righteous government of the earth! No wonder that the Word goes on to add:—"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of Lords, and King of kings: and they that are *with Him* are called, and chosen, and faithful." The distinction is thus drawn between unfaithful partners in their endeavour to right the earth in a wrong way, and He Whose partners in His high and holy work have three necessary characteristics for that work. They are "called, and chosen, and faithful."

May every reader of this book not only hear the call and respond, but by surrender of life to Him Who calls, become one of the chosen, and faithful band who will be privileged to be with the King when He comes to set up His Kingdom on earth.

There are thus two aspects to this wonderful period of time. On the one hand, it is to be a terrible time of ever-increasing dark-

ness and trouble to the nations, till in its later stages, life becomes a fearful nightmare to the inhabitants of the earth. Confusion worse confounded overtakes all efforts at reform, and wickedness in all its awful forms grows worse and worse.

The following extract from a recent issue of the *Times* shows how fast events are moving towards the awful climax :—

THE "RED" CHRISTMAS.

WAR ON RELIGION.

(*From Our Own Correspondent.*)

Berlin, December 22nd.

The Moscow Press states that the Soviet authorities and the leaders of the "Red" Trade Unions are preparing for the Christmas celebrations. Official instructions have been issued strictly forbidding the decoration of Christmas trees with religious emblems, especially figures representing angels, or, in fact anything which might recall the religious nature of the festival.

The same instructions demand the organization on a wide scale of masquerades in order to "emphasise the heathen origin of the day

of rejoicing." The Soviet Press expresses the hope that the Christian Christmas will gradually be replaced by a general carnival with fancy dress, fireworks, etc. The first attempt to introduce this innovation, it is declared, is to be made this Christmastide.

The Bolsheviks are here merely doing openly and unashamedly what millions of so-called Christians have done for years past, namely, made Christ's earthly Birthday an occasion for feasting and pleasuring, keeping the sacred Day more and more merely as a day for enjoying themselves to the full, without a thought of the solemn purpose for which He came—to offer Himself a Sacrifice to atone for our sins.

A paragraph, too, from the *Daily Mail* of February 2nd, 1923, gives a lurid glimpse of what is surely coming :—

MOSCOW BLASPHEMY.

THE WORST OF ALL.

(*From Our Own Correspondent.*)

Berlin, Friday.

A mock trial of Almighty God has been held at Moscow in the club of a garrison,

according to a Moscow despatch received here.

Trotsky and Lunacharski were present and 5,000 Red soldiers. The great hall of the club had been turned into a Court of Justice. Evidence for and against God was given, and speeches were made by counsel for the defence and for the prosecution.

The Communist propaganda department is arranging for the repetition of the trial in other places as a means of destroying Christianity in Russia.

To what appalling heights the wickedness of man is rising, Mr. D. M. Panton clearly shows in an article on "The Resurrection of the Roman Empire" in the July number of his paper, *The Dawn*, from which we quote the following :—

"In February of this year, with the consent of the Vatican, Mgr. Gaggia, the Bishop of Brescia, publicly read from his cathedral pulpit the Fascist Creed and Catechism, taught in the Balilla, or infant training centres organized throughout Italy by Signor Mussolini. The Creed consists of these twelve articles :—

1. I believe in Rome Eternal, the mother of my Fatherland ;
2. And in Italy, her firstborn ;
3. Who was born of her virgin womb by the grace of God ;
4. Who suffered under the barbarian invader, was crucified, slain and buried ;
5. Who descended into the sepulchre, and rose again from the dead in the nineteenth century.
6. Who ascended to Heaven in her glory in 1918 and in 1922 (by the March on Rome) ;
7. Who is seated at the right hand of Mother Rome ;
8. Who will come thence to judge the quick and the dead.
9. I believe in the genius of Mussolini ;
10. In our Holy Father Fascism and in the Communion of its martyrs ;
11. In the conversion of the Italians ; and
12. In the resurrection of the Empire.
Amen !”

As Mr. Panton rightly adds, this Creed is “blasphemous in every line.” It is a further

indication from yet another quarter of Europe, that this so-called Christian Continent is rapidly lapsing into open apostasy, and denial of “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

Several statues of Satan and of Judas Iscariot are said to have been recently set up in Russia! Thus does man as the end draws nearer speak more and more “with a stiff neck” and proudly defy the God Who created him, and gives him his every breath.

But on the other hand, to those who are faithful to their Crucified and Risen Lord, and who still hold fast to the “God-breathed” Word as being the very Word of God Himself, and find its sacred pages heavenly manna to their hungry souls. To them the Hour is but a glad expectant waiting in the ante-chamber, before being ushered into the Presence of their beloved Saviour and King.

There is a passage in Isaiah’s 33rd chapter, which well brings out this double aspect of the Midnight Hour, verses 17 and 18 read:—“Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty: they shall behold a very far-stretching hand. Thine heart shall meditate terror.”

The former is the portion of the true believer, with heart fully prepared to meet the King waiting for the first sight of Heaven—a far-stretching Land indeed! The latter shews the Hour as a time of terror to the formal professor and unbeliever. Verse 14 reads: “The sinners in Zion are afraid ; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites.” The mere church or chapel goer, who has no real heart-love for the Lord Jesus, will be terrified at the events that are beginning to happen on the earth. But the Spirit-filled child of God knows from the Word, that before this dread Hour has gone far on its course, or reached its last appalling phase of horror he will have quitted the scene at his Lord’s summons, to meet Him in the air, and will not return till that glad happy moment when he will descend with that same glorious Saviour Who once trod this earth in meekness and sorrow, to see Him at last established on His rightful throne, ruling all nations with a rod of iron ; and will enjoy the sight of a happy earth, now transformed under Messiah’s righteous government, becoming once again a very Garden of the Lord !

“ And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates : and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her : and they shall be weary. Thus far are the words of Jeremiah ” (Jer. li. 63, 64).

“ In the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace : and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote ” (Daniel v. 5).

“ Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication ” (Rev. xiv. 8).

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FALL OF BABYLON.

OF the four great world-empires, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, which Nebuchadnezzar was told should rule the world, in that wonderful dream given in the second chapter of Daniel, God chose the first, as a picture-type throughout Scripture of world-power, and again and again the name is used as a type of world overlordship to be finally destroyed at the close of the Times of the Gentiles and the Coming of Christ. From this, many have conceived the idea that Babylon, the actual city on the Euphrates, would be rebuilt ! But there is nothing anywhere in the Word of God to suggest that this would ever be done. The passages which have been so read, are simply prophetic types of the final glory and sudden destruction of world-power. There is a very dramatic historical incident in Daniel v., recording the last hour of the great Babylonian empire, behind which God hides the full details of the

way in which, when the Times of the Gentiles expire, the power of typical Babylon is also to be brought low !

At the time spoken of in Daniel v., Babylon was still a mighty empire, and all the wealth of the world contributed to its luxury and splendour. But the shadow of the coming catastrophe was lying over the city, and its last hour was striking ! To that hour God devotes a whole chapter of His Word, that as we study this dramatic historical incident, we may take warning, and, reading the handwriting on the wall, may be wise in time, and “ flee from the wrath to come.”

History tells us that Cyrus, the king of Medo-Persia, had sent a mighty army to besiege Babylon, and it was at this very moment encamped under its walls. Those mighty walls, 100 feet high, and so broad that two or three chariots could drive abreast along the summit, were apparently impregnable, and as the vast city, the circumference of which was about 75 miles, was provisioned for a 20 years’ siege, Belshazzar (who occupied the throne in the absence of his father, Nabonidus, then absent dedicating a temple

in a distant part of the empire), thought that he could afford to ignore the army gathered round Babylon. So this night he was engaged in keeping a great religious festival, the whole city being given over likewise to feasting and dancing. In the palace a thousand of the chief nobles were being entertained by the king, and we can easily imagine the scene of imperial splendour, the richly coloured robes of the assembled lords, the silken cushions on the divans, the beautiful curtains, the flaming gold and silver torches lighting up the huge hall, the tables laden with rich luxurious viands and wines, the whole world contributing to the luxury and comfort of this queen of cities.

Yet its doom was close at hand ! Suddenly “the fingers of a man’s hand” began to trace a mysterious message upon the wall. All eyes are turned to gaze ! “Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin,” writes the Unknown Penman. Doubt and terror fill every face. What can it mean ? What does it forebode ? Daniel is finally summoned, and reads the Message of Doom. That very hour it fell, the city was taken and the king slain.

Now the pages of history record for us the cause of its sudden fall. Through the great city flowed the broad river Euphrates for a distance of eight miles, and Gobryas, Cyrus' general, had conceived the idea of digging a new channel for the river some way outside the walls. This very night, counting upon the city being given over at this religious festival to rioting and revelry, he had caused the sluices to be raised, and soon the waters were flowing through the new channel, and his army, advancing in the dead of night up the now dry channel of the river, marched up into the city and completed its capture. *The drying-up of the Euphrates* was thus the signal cause of the fall of Babylon.

Now the Euphrates is used in several parts of God's Word as a type of that empire which in the closing days of the Times of the Gentiles should be in possession of that river, namely, the Turkish Empire. And we are thus told that the drying-up of the typical Euphrates, the Turkish empire, would be the signal cause of the fall of the Gentile imperial system at the Time of the End.

But let us look first at the story of the feast. Daniel v. 5 reads: "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." There are some very wonderful things typically embodied in this verse. First, the Hour. It is when the last hour is just beginning that the "fingers" appear.

Now the typical "hour" or period of years seems to have begun at 11 a.m. on November 11th, 1918, when God sounded "Eleven o'clock" so dramatically. Did the "fingers" appear then? Well to ascertain whether they did or not, we must see whether there is any other place where the Holy Spirit uses this word "fingers." It is a Syriac word, "etsbean," and only occurs elsewhere in Daniel ii. There it is used in verses 40, 41, where it is rendered "toes." We find in this passage that Nebuchadnezzar is told that the course of the Times of the Gentiles began with his reign, and will end with the setting-up of ten rulers who will consist "part of iron and part of clay," that

is, some would be monarchial, and some republican or democratic. The passage reads : “ And whereas thou sawest the feet and *toes*, part of potter’s clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided,” and again, “ And as the *toes* of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken.”

We are thus shown by the use of the word “ etsbean” in this chapter and Daniel v. only, that the “ fingers” typically represent the last phase of Gentile sovereignty, the ten-toed phase, and we are further told in ver. 44 of chapter ii. : “ And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

Just as the “ fingers” writing on the wall spelt the doom of the great Babylonian empire, the first of the empires to rule during the Seven Times of Gentile sovereignty, so the appearance of a ten-toed form of rule in the closing days of the Times of the Gentiles

would be the “fingers” writing again upon the wall, the doom of Gentile rule. And, as we have seen, the instant the clock struck Eleven, there came into being a Council of Ten, which was also divided, like the toes were, into two bodies of five each. For Great Britain, France, the United States, Japan, and Italy each had one representative upon the Council, whilst the rest of the Allied powers, some 25 or more, had to be content with choosing five representatives to sit with the other five upon the Council.

<i>Great.</i>	<i>Small.</i>
Great Britain.	Five
France.	representatives.
United States.	
Japan.	
Italy.	

Very remarkable too was it, that though six years had passed, and much had happened in the interval, yet when the London Conference was convened in the closing months of 1924, the number of nations represented was exactly ten, and, as before, they were divided into two bodies of five each as follows:—

<i>Iron,</i>	<i>Clay,</i>
<i>or Monarchical.</i>	<i>or Republican.</i>
Great Britain.	France.
Italy.	Greece.
Japan.	Germany.
Belgium.	Portugal.
Roumania.	Jugo-Slavia.

Truly the Handwriting is on the wall !
 May every reader be wise in time.

Another point to notice in this remarkable fifth verse of Daniel v. is that the Syriac word, “kethab,” or wall, only occurs in one other place in Scripture, and that is in Ezra v. 8, where the walls of “the house of the great God” are referred to. These two walls have their counterpart also in the End-Time. Every living soul is either a “living stone” for the wall of the spiritual Temple of the great God of Heaven, or a dead stone in the wall of the palace of the king of Babylon. Satan is the Prince of this world, and all who refuse to become “living stones” through faith in Christ, the Master Builder, will

presently share in the great crash when mighty Babylon falls to its ruin.

One other point yet remains, we are told that the "fingers" writing the fateful message were made visible or plain to all by the light of the "candlestick" which lit up the wonderful scene. This candlestick was evidently one of "the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem," and these were displayed by the king in the banquet hall. These vessels were constructed by Solomon, David giving him "the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit . . . for all the vessels of service in the house of the Lord" (1. Chron. xxviii. 12, 13). This Candlestick, then, represented in type the Lord Jesus Christ shining in the hearts of His people, and it was by its light that the Message was made plain. So it is to-day, those who love the Lord Jesus, and are filled with the Holy Spirit, who are to light up the Message of these closing days, and warn the careless and ignorant of the fate that awaits them if they remain unresponsive to the Divine Word.

We are now in a position to turn to the

New Testament, and see how God again uses this dramatic story of the sudden Fall of the great empire of Babylon in a single night, as a symbolic picture of what He is about to do as the Times of the Gentiles expire. In Revelation ix. 13 we read of the sixth angel sounding his trumpet, and a voice is heard saying, "Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates." In these words and in what follows we are given a symbolic picture of the outbreak of a great war fought by four nations, whose total population is stated at "two hundred thousand thousand," or 200,000,000 persons. Now this was almost exactly the total population of the four nations and their colonies, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, that fought the recent war. We are told too that the struggle would be connected with the river Euphrates, in other words that it would concern the Turkish Empire, and when we turn for a moment to Revelation xvi., we read in verse 12 that "the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates ; and *the water thereof was dried up* that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared."

Here we are given another symbolic vision of the struggle, and are told that the outcome, foreknown by God, would be the drying up of the Euphrates. That is to say, the war of the four kings would have as its result the drying-up of the Turkish Empire. And as we know, as soon as the Turks had been driven back to the extreme north of the Holy Land, and the Euphratean waters had dried up, an Armistice was signed with them on October 31st, 1918, and eleven days later, God stopped the Great War ! The land was at last dry, and ready for those "kings from the rising of the sun," who, "kings and priests unto God and His Father," having first been raptured to meet their Saviour in the air, are to return with Him to take part in the dramatic Fall of Babylon, when the Sun of Righteousness shines forth in all His glorious splendour ! Thus just as the drying-up of the river Euphrates was the prelude to the fall of the actual city of Babylon, so the drying-up of the Turkish Empire was the necessary prelude to the Fall of typical Babylon or world-power. As soon as this was accomplished on October 31st, 1918, the clock struck Eleven, and the

Council of Ten began to reign the very next day ! God's Word in Revelation xvii. 12 defines the limit of their authority as follows : " And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet ; but receive authority (lit.) as kings *one hour* with the beast."

Presently, as we read in the same chapter, this Council will " give their power and strength unto the beast." One out of their number will assume supreme control, and will still be in control when Babylon suddenly falls. " For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His Will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." The very next chapter (Rev. xviii.) is wholly occupied with the great Fall of typical Babylon. " Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen."

And the solemn warning is given : " Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." The tremendous message could hardly have been written in plainer language, easily read by all who study God's holy Word. It is ours, having read it, to proclaim it from

the house-tops, and to pass it on to all who will listen. Never was there such a gracious privilege given to redeemed sinners, never such a solemn responsibility placed upon the Lord's people, as is ours to-day.

“Behold I shew you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed” (1. Cor. xv. 51, 52).

“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Rev. xx. 5, 6).

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

THE Glad Event is certain ! The very same Jesus Who came once to this earth is *coming again* ! And, as we have seen, the promised signs of His Return are being fulfilled before our very eyes !

Well, then, will it be for us, if we have taken to heart our Lord's warning words : " See, He said, the fig-tree and all the trees. As soon as they have shot out their leaves, you know at a glance that summer is now near. So also when you see these things happening, you may be sure that the Kingdom of God is near. I tell you in solemn truth that the present generation will certainly not pass away without all these things having first taken place. Earth and sky will pass away, but it is certain that My Word will not pass away " (Luke xxi. 29-33, Weymouth). He is speaking here to four of His disciples, and through them to all His disciples down the years, and He tells that generation of them, which is privileged to see the fulfilment of the signs given, that,

as a generation, they will not pass away without seeing the glorious event come to pass. Individuals may die, but the generation of Christ's disciples then on earth, will be the one to have the joy of welcoming the returning King !

But how shall we welcome Him ? Will it be to this earth, or in the air ? The Word tells us plainly that it will be "in the air" that the glad meeting will take place.

We read in 1. Thess. iv. 15-17 (Weymouth), " For this we declare to you on the Lord's own authority—that we who are alive and continue on earth until the Coming of the Lord, shall certainly not forestall those who shall have previously passed away. For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a loud word of command, and with an archangel's voice and the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Afterwards we who are alive and are still on earth will be caught up in their company amid clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall be with the Lord for ever."

It is clear, then, that those who love the Lord will be taken up to meet Him in the air,

and we can well imagine the consternation that will be caused on earth for a time by their departure! It will not be a pleasant thing for those who are left behind to find that the Word which they refused to believe, has come true, especially as that same despised Word draws a dreadful picture of the awful state of the world, when those who have believed the Word and trusted in the Saviour, have been taken out of it.

And here we might pause to ask the question. "Will every real Christian be taken up at this time?" We must go to the Word for the answer to this question. There are some passages which at first sight might be read to indicate that every real believer in the Lord Jesus Christ will be caught up, but there are other passages which seem to state that only those Christians who are expressly watching for their Lord, and in heart-communion with Him, will enjoy this great privilege of being "called unto the Marriage Supper of the Lamb."

For instance, our Lord, in the passage in Luke xxi. quoted above, goes on to say to His disciples: "But take heed to yourselves

lest your souls be weighed down with self-indulgence and drunkenness, or the anxieties of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a falling trap ; for it will come on all the dwellers on the face of the whole earth. But beware of slumbering ; and every moment pray that you may be fully strengthened to escape from all these coming evils, and to take your stand in the presence of the Son of Man."

These words seem to indicate a possibility that "slumbering" Christians may be caught in the "trap." The Greek word rendered "dwellers" means really "those who sit," that is make themselves comfortable, in contrast to the attitude of those who, with loins girded and lights burning, are standing in an attitude of expectation and readiness for an instant summons. The Lord says: "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching." And again: "Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not." And again: "Watch ye, therefore . . . lest coming suddenly, He find you sleeping."

Then in I. Cor. xv. 23 we read, speaking of the resurrection : “ But every man in his own order : Christ the firstfruits ; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.”

Here the word “ order ” is a Greek word “ *tagma*,” and strictly does not mean “ order,” it literally means, a brigade or division of troops, and when used figuratively it always speaks of a series or succession. So here we seem to be clearly told that all believers will not be taken up together, “ but every man in his own brigade.”

Here I might quote the words of that stalwart saint, the late Prebendary Webb-Peploe, who wrote the Prefaces to the second and third editions of this book. In his book, “ *The Victorious Life*,” he writes, speaking of the Lord’s Return : “ It seems to me that we might say of the Church to-day, that one-half (I wish it were as large a proportion as that) are ready to go into the marriage feast of the Lamb, and that half, though among the elect, must pass through the tribulation of the latter days. For their sakes the days are to be shortened. The trial will come upon them at sore cost to their comfort, but they will be accepted at

last. The Lord comes and takes the ready and waiting part of the Church into the marriage feast in the air away from the world where they may learn to know each other—as a bridal couple to-day leave their parents and go into seclusion, that each may learn to know and trust the other.”

Let another beloved servant of the Lord, who perhaps more than any other single man was used for the evangelisation of China, Mr. Hudson Taylor, the founder of the China Inland Mission, give his opinion, which he does in his book “Union and Communion”: “We wish to place on record our solemn conviction that not all who are Christians, or think themselves to be such, will attain to that resurrection of which St. Paul speaks in Phil. iii. 11, or will thus meet the Lord in the air. Unto those who by lives of consecration manifest that they are not of the world, but are looking for Him, ‘He will appear without sin unto salvation.’”

In view of this, the only *safe* attitude for the believer is one of constant watchfulness and entire separation from the world, so as to ensure being caught up at the outset, for it

seems very probable that "sleeping" ones will be left behind for a time, and so not only miss the joy of that blessed function, symbolically referred to as "the Marriage Supper of the Lamb," but also have to stay on earth during a part of Antichrist's awful reign, and face the terrible persecutions of "the Great Tribulation."

It is clear, at any rate, that there *will* be some believers on earth during this awful period, for our Lord in describing it says: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Now the Greek word for "elect" is "*eklektous*," which means "chosen ones," and is constantly used of believers, so that these "elect" are either those who have trusted in the Saviour subsequent to the rapture of believers, or those who, being unwatchful were left behind. It probably includes both.

Most, if not all, of these "elect" ones on earth during the final portion of the midnight

hour, suffer martyrdom, for in Revelation xiii. 15 we read of this terrible time that “he had power to . . . cause that as many as would not worship the image of the Beast should be killed”; and again in Revelation xx. 4 it speaks of “the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

But that they also *are* raised and taken up at some later time to be with Christ, is clearly shown from the above passage, where they are seen reigning over the earth with Christ in the glad Millennial Day; whilst they also appear amongst the armies of Christ coming with Him to the earth, in Rev. xvii. 14, “and they that are with Him are called, and chosen (lit., elect) and faithful.”

After the “first fruits” have been raptured to that secret meeting place “in the air,” the world grows darker, the midnight “hour” pursues its awful course, the loss of the “salt” hastens the putrefaction of the

unbelieving world, and as we have seen, fearful persecution of those who believe in Christ sets in, and the harvest of those who come out of “the Great Tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb” is garnered. It is at this time that Antichrist, that Man of Sin, makes his appearance, and commences his awful reign of wickedness, being worshipped as God. How long he is permitted to defy God we do not know, but from the fact that on the opening of the seventh seal in Revelation viii. 1, there is “silence in heaven about the space of half an hour,” it would seem that the time during which God is silent, allowing this terrible king to work his wicked will, is about seven years; for if a prophetic hour of Gentile sovereignty is fifteen years, half an hour would be $7\frac{1}{2}$ years, and this period as we have seen, would probably coincide approximately with the last half of the final hour.

This king is called the “beast” in Rev. xvii., and in verse 12 we are told that the ten kings “receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and

shall give their power and strength unto the beast." At the close of the hour, the great clash of Armageddon will take place, and so verse 14 goes on : " These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them : for He is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings : and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

Then the Lord Jesus Christ issues from heaven with the hosts of His raptured saints, to put an end to earth's trials, so that the glad Sabbath Day of the Millennium may run its happy course. Antichrist is destroyed with all his hosts. Satan is bound captive in the Bottomless Pit for a thousand years. And Messiah rules with His saints over an earth filled with His glory. Then will perfect government be at last seen on earth. " In His days shall the righteous flourish ; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

Democracy, with its dream of social reform, and education, and civilisation, as the uplifting agencies of sinful man, will never

bring about this happy time. One thing, and one thing alone, will effect it ; and that is the glorious Presence of the Lord Jesus Christ reigning over the kings of the earth.

Well will it be for you, reader, if you have listened in time to the voice of the wise old Prime Minister of the great Babylonian Empire, who by divine inspiration wrote of this time of the end that “ there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time : and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be *found written in the Book.*” Is your name “ written in the Book of Life ” ?

“ He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself : he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar ; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life ; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God ; that ye may *know* that ye have eternal

life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

As to events after the close of earth's week of seven 1,000-year days, we are told that "when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." This "little season" as it is called, during which Satan is loosed, is evidently intended to test the nations of the earth as to their attitude towards the Lord Jesus Christ.

Whilst Satan is bound, and the Lord reigns over the earth, evil is kept down with a strong hand, and everyone yields obedience to the King of Kings. But with many this will only be a feigned obedience; their evil heart still remains, and as soon as Satan again raises the signal of rebellion, thousands flock to his standard, and again endeavour to defy God's holy will. Then fire comes down from heaven and devours these rebellious ones. The Devil that deceived them is finally cast into the Lake of Fire prepared

for him and his angels. The Great White Throne is set up, earth and heaven flee away and are burnt up, and the "dead," that is, unsaved souls, are gathered from earth, and sea, and Hades, to receive the sentence already pronounced upon all who refuse to believe God's Word, and so make Him "a liar." That awful sin of unbelief in God's Word brings inevitably the just wrath of God upon the sinner, from which there is then no escape. "And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire."

This awful judgment over, we are shown the picture of a New Heaven and a New Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Then the glad days of Eternity begin for all the hosts of Christ's redeemed ones, that glorious, indescribable life of blissful service of which our minds can form no conception. Gladly then will we watch and wait for the Coming of our Saviour, Whose Advent will close this life of sorrow and suffering, to open to our joyful eyes in our incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual bodies such a vista of halcyon days to come.

So, watching and labouring to open the eyes of others ere it be too late, will we toil early and late in the harvest-field to garner in, by the power, and under the guidance, of the Holy Spirit, the precious sheaves, till that glad moment when the Lord of the Harvest shall sound the Trumpet-call : “Come up hither,” and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we shall be “changed” into our resurrection bodies, and rise into the air to meet Him Whom we love—

“FACE TO FACE.”

“ But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as day one ”

(II. Peter iii. 8).

“ In the Spirit I found myself present on the day of the Lord, and I heard behind me a loud voice which resembled the blast of a trumpet ”

(Rev. i. 10, Weymouth).

CHAPTER XV.

EARTH'S GREAT WEEK OF HISTORY.

WE have referred once or twice to the fact that the Word clearly indicates that God ordained the history of this earth, with the present race of human beings, to be a Week of Days, of which each Day was to last for a thousand years. But many fail to see this in the Word, so it may be well to point out a few passages where this truth is both hidden and revealed.

Let us first turn to II. Peter iii., where we are told that "in the last days," scoffers would come "walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His Coming? For since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." We are told that the reason for this unbelief in the Lord's Return would be the wilful rejection of the first chapter of Genesis as a record of God's having made the heavens and the earth by His creative Word. In face of this chapter they would deliberately believe the evolution lie.

This would lead them also to reject the story of the Flood, that great cataclysmic judgment, by which "the world that then was, being overflowed with water perished." The Word then goes on to say that the present heavens and earth are going to be cleansed by a fiery judgment, and as to the date of this coming catastrophe, warns us in these words : "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as day one."

Thus we are given the key to unlock God's purposes regarding this world, that prophetic days are to be regarded as days of a thousand years each ! But where shall we find these Days mentioned in Scripture ? To begin with, Moses refers to them in the oldest prayer in the Word, the 90th Psalm, verse 4, "For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past." But in the verse in which we have this key given, we are referred to a passage in the opening part of the Bible by the fact that the Holy Spirit in writing "a thousand years as Day One," is clearly quoting from Gen. i. 5, where we read, "And the

evening and the morning were Day One." We are in this way clearly told that when reading this first chapter of Genesis as a typical picture of future history, we are to look upon each Day as a period of one thousand years. For although the original week of history in which God re-created this earth to make it habitable for the present race of human beings, points clearly to an actual week of days of twenty-four hours each. Yet when we read this chapter in its typical meaning, we are told by the quotation of this verse 5 to read each Day as a type of a period of one thousand years, indicating that the present history of the earth is to be a week of six days of 1,000 years each, followed by a Sabbath Day of rest of 1,000 years, completing 7,000 years in all. It is to this seventh Sabbath Day that Rev. xx. so graphically refers, when it says, "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Reading Scripture with this key in our hands, we find wonderful light thrown on passages that are otherwise difficult, not to say almost impossible to understand. For it is in terms of 1,000-year Days that God dates

both the First and Second Comings of His Beloved Son !

Let us begin with God's first great picture of redeeming love. The first chapter in which God mentions love in the Bible ! The 22nd chapter of Genesis, where God says to Abraham, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest." One must be blind indeed not to see in this wonderful story the whole details of the glorious record of Atoning Love, and Substitutionary Sacrifice. Every tiny word in the story adds its part in revealing the wonder of that Great Sacrifice to be enacted nearly 2,000 years later on the very same hill of Calvary. And even the chronology is given too, for in verse 4 we read, "Then on day three Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off."

Why is the apparently trifling fact that Abraham got his first glimpse of the appointed hill of sacrifice on "day three" so carefully recorded. Surely to hide in type the time when the Great Sacrifice, of which this was only a shadow picture, should itself take place.

Abraham was born, according to the Word, in the year 2008 from Adam. Two 1,000-year

Days had gone by, and there were still 2,000 more years to elapse, that is, two great Days of 1,000 years each, had still to roll by before the heavenly Isaac, the Lamb of God, would come and die for the sins of the world. Abraham then by faith lifted up his eyes, and looked across these two long intervening 1,000-year Days to that third Day on which the Sacrifice, that should atone for the sins of the world, should actually take place ! Abraham stood in the third 1,000-year Day of earth's history from Adam, and he looked across that day, and the next, the fourth Day, to that fifth Day (but the third from that in which he stood), when the Lord Jesus should be lifted up upon the Cross of Calvary ! May it not have been to this that our Lord referred when He said in John viii. 56, " Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My Day, and he saw it, and was glad."

Again, pass on to that next great picture in Exodus xii., where on that fateful night of deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, the children of Israel stood ready for departure, feeding upon the flesh of the slain lamb, whose blood, sprinkled on the lintel and door-posts,

sheltered them from the hand of the destroying Angel. That lamb, they were expressly commanded, was to be chosen out from the flock on the tenth day of the month, verse 3, and to be kept in the house till "the fourteenth day of the same month, and the whole assembly of the children of Israel shall kill it between the two evenings." Why was the lamb to be chosen on the tenth day, and yet not killed till the fourteenth day had expired, thus being kept in the house for four days? Surely to show in the type that the Lamb of God, of which it was a picture, and Who was "fore-ordained before the foundation of the world," would be kept up in the Father's House, Heaven, for four Days of 1,000 years each, before He would come to this earth to be slain on the Cross for us poor sinners.

Thus we see that God hid in type, in terms of 1,000-year Days, the exact period that would elapse from Adam to the First Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In exactly similar terms, has He hidden in the Word the period that must elapse before the glorious Second Coming of the Lord shall take its place in history!

Turn first to Hosea v. 15, where in a prophecy written down some 700 years before the First Coming of the Saviour, we find words put into His mouth telling of His Second Coming. "I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek My Face: in their affliction they will seek Me early." Thus is the Lord represented as saying that in consequence of the Jews committing the offence of crucifying their King, He would return to His place, i.e., Heaven, and would remain there till they should acknowledge that they had killed their own Messiah. He adds that, "in their affliction," a clear reference to what is called "Jacob's trouble" in another part of the Word, they will seek Him diligently. This time of affliction refers to Antichrist's reign, and the awful battle of Armageddon. In that time of trouble, as we are told elsewhere, there will be a little handful of godly Jews, who will plead with the Messiah their nation crucified, to come and save them. Their prayer is given in the first three verses of chapter vi., in which they acknowledge that it is God Who has smitten them, and they go on to say: "After

two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His Coming is as certain as the dawn" (lit.). Now there are no two days in Israel's history to which this passage can refer. But if we use the key given us, and understand a prophetic reference to two 1,000-year Days to elapse between the offence committed by Israel, in crucifying their Messiah, and the time of His Return to rescue them in their hour of awful peril, all is clear. The Gospel Dispensation is foretold as a period of two 1,000-year Days, and the "third Day," when the dead Jewish nation is to be revived, and again to be a spiritual force in the world, is that Millennial Day, to which we are so rapidly hastening. It is the "third Day" since the Lord's First Coming, but the seventh Day from Adam's creation.

Now if we turn to the New Testament, we find that our Lord Himself foretold the time of His Second Coming in exactly similar terms. In Luke xiii. 31, some Pharisees came to our Lord with the intimation that Herod would try to kill Him. His reply was, "Go ye and

tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." Now He was three days' journey from Jerusalem, as He Himself tells us in the next verse, so this reply cannot refer to His Crucifixion, which was not to take place till some days after He reached Jerusalem. So what can it mean? Simply that our Lord is prophetically speaking in terms of 1,000-year Days, and says that His death will not affect His activities. But that for two 1,000-year Days, "to-day and to-morrow," He will go on doing wonderful works of grace in poor sinners' hearts, till that glorious "third Day" shall dawn, when He will "be perfected," that is the third Day from His First Coming, the seventh Day from Adam's creation, when His glory will be manifested over the whole world through His actual Presence on the earth!

Thus our Lord Himself foretold that His Second Coming would not take place till two more long 1,000-year Days had rolled past.

There is the same information hidden away in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, where the "certain Samaritan," when He departs,

“ took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him ; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.” Here He tells us that He is coming again, and meanwhile He has left “ two pence ” to pay for the work He has entrusted to us. When we wonder why two pence should have been selected, we remember that in another parable the pay of the Lord’s labourers in His vineyard was fixed by Him at one penny a day, so He leaves two pence to cover the two 1,000-year Days of His absence before He comes again. And He adds that if we seem to be spending more in His service than we are being repaid now, He Himself will repay us when He comes again ! Hallelujah !

These Days are also referred to in that great Pentecost chapter, Acts ii., where Peter, quoting the prophet Joel, says : “ And it shall come to pass in the last Days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh.” Here, as elsewhere in Scripture, “ the last Days ” refer to the two last 1,000-year Days of the week “ before that great and notable Day of the Lord come ” (verse 20). This

great and notable Day is, of course, the Millennial Sabbath Day, which is to close the present period of history, and usher in Eternity.

Before that great and notable Day comes, we are told of two events which will precede it. In the 19th verse we learn that the closing scenes of this present Dispensation of the Holy Spirit will be marked by celestial signs, and on earth "blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke," the three new weapons used in the Great War of 1914. That great struggle is to be followed by yet another (verse 20), when "the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood," this phrase clearly foreshadowing the horrors of the final Armageddon struggle.

There are many other passages where these 1,000-year Days are referred to in Scripture, but these will surely suffice to prove that earth's present history is clearly described as a Week of Days, consisting of 1,000 years each.

If some then will remark that, being only in the year 1926, we have 74 years yet to run out before the 6,000 years are completed, we would reply that, while some chronologists believe our present dating to be erroneous,

and that 6,000 years from Adam is just on the point of expiring, we think the explanation of our seeing at this present time all the Signs of our Lord's imminent Return, is to be found in Matt. xxiv. 21, 22. Here our Lord tells us that the increase of trouble upon the earth in the closing era would be so dreadful, that in mercy God has decided to shorten the Days. "For the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." He says if that were not so, there should no flesh be saved. And the rising tide of Bolshevism, anarchy and lawlessness give us an indication that this time of tribulation is fast drawing near its climax.

"The wise shall understand."

Now, in this time of the end, God, as He promised, has unsealed the Word, and given us the clearest possible light as to the time of the Second Coming of the once crucified Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. That Coming will bring in the Golden Age on earth for which the whole creation groans and pants. "For the earnest longing of creation is expecting the Unveiling of the Son of God," as the late Bishop Moule renders Romans viii. 13.

But the dawn of the New Age is to be preceded by a time of fearful trouble upon earth. "And they shall look unto the earth: and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness." Again, "upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken"; and again, "Fear, and the pit, and the snare are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth."

The Midnight Hour will grow darker and darker till the gloom is of blackest intensity, but ever through the murkiness of the awful night shines the clear, Spirit-given lamp of the prophetic Word, bidding us "look up"; and like Him Who "when the time was come that He should be received up, steadfastly set His Face to go to Jerusalem," so should *we* set our faces steadfastly towards the City of Light, and watch with eager, joyous, radiant hearts, and sun-lit faces for that glad Christmas morning which shall see the end of this earth's awful Midnight Hour,

and herald the Coming of Him Who shall fill the whole earth with His glory !

“ And it shall be said in that Day, Lo, this is our God ; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.”

Then let us be of good cheer, brothers !

The Day will soon be here, brothers,

The Victory is near, brothers,

And the sound of the glad “ Well done ! ”

There’ll be no sad heart in the morning,

No tear will start in the dawning,

There’ll be joy in that Christmas morning,

When the King comes for His own !

We’re in for the winning side, brothers !

Bound to the Lord Who died, brothers,

We shall see Him glorified, brothers,

And the Lamb shall wear the crown.

What of the cold world’s scorning ?

There’ll be joy enough in the morning,

There’ll be joy in that Christmas norming,

When the King comes for His own !

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AND

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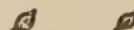
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